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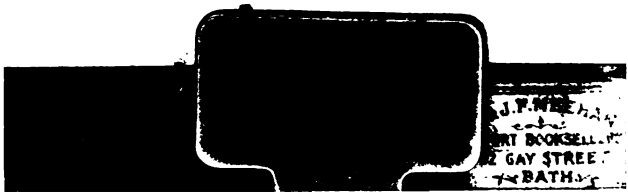


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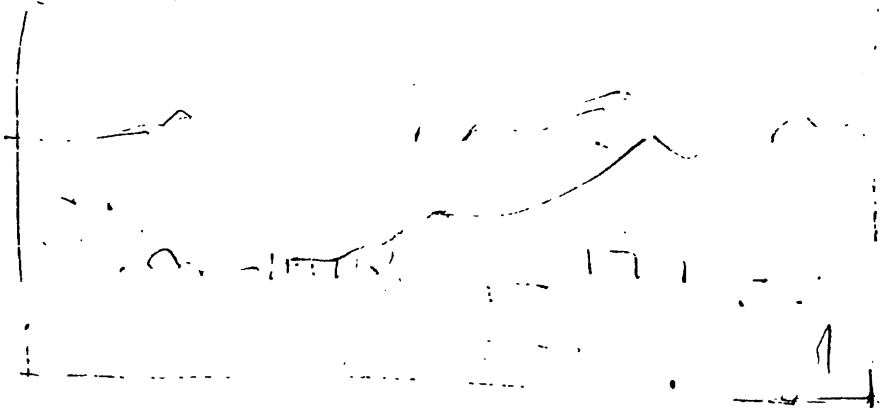
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MEMOIRS

OF THE

EARLY ITALIAN PAINTERS,

AND OF THE

PROGRESS OF PAINTING IN ITALY.

FROM CIMABUE TO BASSANO.

By Mrs. JAMESON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

EARLY ITALIAN PAINTERS.

LIONARDO DA VINCI:

Born 1452; died 1519.

We now approach the period when the art of painting reached its highest perfection, whether considered with reference to poetry of conception, or the mechanical means through which these conceptions were embodied in the noblest forms. Within a short period of about thirty years, *i. e.* between 1490 and 1520, the greatest painters whom the world has yet seen were living and working together. On looking back we cannot but feel that the excellence they attained was the result of the efforts and aspirations of a preceding age; and yet these men were so great in their vocation, and so individual in their greatness, that, losing sight of the linked chain of progress, they seemed at first

to have had no precursors, as they have since had no peers. Though living at the same time, and most of them in personal relation with each other, the direction of each mind was different—was peculiar; though exercising in some sort a reciprocal influence, this influence never interfered with the most decided originality. These wonderful artists, who would have been remarkable men in their time, though they had never touched a pencil, were Lionardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Correggio, Giorgione, Titian, in Italy; and in Germany, Albert Durer. Of these men, we might say, as of Homer and Shakspere, that they belong to no particular age or country, but to all time, and to the universe. That they flourished together within one brief and brilliant period, and that each carried out to the highest degree of perfection his own peculiar aims, was no casualty: nor are we to seek for the causes of this surpassing excellence merely in the history of the art as such. The causes lay far deeper, and must be referred to the history of human culture. The fermenting activity of the fifteenth century found its results in the extraordinary development of human intelligence in the commencement of the sixteenth century. We often hear in these days of "the spirit of the age;" but in that wonderful age three mighty spirits were stirring society to its depths:—the spirit of bold investigation into truths of all kinds, which led to



Lionardo da Vinci.

the Reformation; the spirit of daring adventure, which led men in search of new worlds beyond the eastern and the western oceans; and the spirit of art, through which men soared even to the "seventh heaven of invention."

Lionardo da Vinci seems to present in his own person a *résumé* of all the characteristics of the age in which he lived. He was *the* miracle of that age of miracles. Ardent and versatile as youth; patient and persevering as age; a most profound and original thinker; the greatest mathematician and most ingenious mechanic of his time; architect, chemist, engineer, musician, poet, painter!—we are not only astounded by the variety of his natural gifts and acquired knowledge, but by the practical direction of his amazing powers.* The extracts which have been published from MSS. now existing in his own handwriting show him to have anticipated by the force of his own intellect some of the greatest discoveries made since his time. These fragments, says Mr. Hallam,† "are, according to our common estimate of the age in which he lived, more like revelations of physical truths vouchsafed to a single mind, than the superstructure of its reasoning upon any established basis. The discoveries which made

* The Italian writers thus sum up the qualifications of Lionardo with an array of discriminative epithets not easily translated:—"*Valente* musico e poeta; *ingegnoso* mecanico; *profondo* geometra e matematico; *egregio* architetto; *esimio* idraulico; *eccelente* plasticatore e *sommo* pittore."

† 'History of the Literature of Europe.'

Galileo, Kepler, Castelli, and other names illustrious—the system of Copernicus—the very theories of recent geologists, are anticipated by Da Vinci within the compass of a few pages, not perhaps in the most precise language, or on the most conclusive reasoning, but so as to strike us with something like the awe of preternatural knowledge. In an age of so much dogmatism, he first laid down the grand principle of Bacon, that experiment and observation must be the guides to just theory in the investigation of nature. If any doubt could be harboured, not as to the right of Lionardo da Vinci to stand as the first name of the fifteenth century, which is beyond all doubt,* but as to his originality in so many discoveries, which probably no one man, especially in such circumstances, has ever made—it must be by an hypothesis not very untenable, that some parts of physical science had already attained a height which mere books do not record."

It seems at first sight almost incomprehensible that, thus endowed as a philosopher, mechanic, inventor, discoverer, the fame of Lionardo should now rest on the works he has left as a painter. We cannot, within these limits, attempt to explain why and how it is that as the man of science he has been naturally and necessarily left behind by the onward

* When we think of Lionardo's contemporary, Columbus, we feel inclined, if not to dispute this fiat of the great historian, at least to ponder on it, and those ponderings lead

r.

march of intellectual progress, while as the poet-painter he still survives as a presence and a power. We must proceed at once to give some account of him in the character in which he exists to us and for us—that of the great artist.

Lionardo was born at Vinci, near Florence, in the Lower Val d'Arno, on the borders of the territory of Pistoia. His father, Piero da Vinci, was an advocate of Florence—not rich, but in independent circumstances, and possessed of estates in land. The singular talents of his son induced Piero to give him, from an early age, the advantage of the best instructors. As a child, he distinguished himself by his proficiency in arithmetic and mathematics. Music he studied early, as a science as well as an art. He invented a species of lyre for himself, and sung his own poetical compositions to his own music—both being frequently extemporaneous. But his favourite pursuit was the art of design in all its branches; he modelled in clay or wax, or attempted to draw every object which struck his fancy. His father sent him to study under Andrea Verrocchio (of whom we have already given some account)* famous as a sculptor, chaser in metal, and painter. Andrea, who was an excellent and correct designer, but a bad and hard colourist, was soon after engaged to paint a picture of the Baptism of our Saviour. He employed Lionardo, then

* See vol. i. p. 149.

a youth, to execute one of the angels: this he did with so much softness and richness of colour, that it far surpassed the rest of the picture; and Verocchio from that time threw away his palette, and confined himself wholly to his works in sculpture and design; "enraged," says Vasari, "that a child should thus excel him."*

The youth of Lionardo thus passed away in the pursuit of science and of art: sometimes he was deeply engaged in astronomical calculations and investigations; sometimes ardent in the study of natural history, botany, and anatomy; sometimes intent on new effects of colour, light, shadow, or expression, in representing objects animate or inanimate. Versatile, yet persevering, he varied his pursuits, but he never abandoned any. He was quite a young man when he conceived and demonstrated the practicability of two magnificent projects: one was, to lift the whole of the church of San Lorenzo, by means of immense levers, some feet higher than it now stands, and thus supply the deficient elevation;† the other project was, to form the Arno into a navigable canal, as far as Pisa,

* This picture is now preserved in the Academy at Florence. The first angel on the right is that which was painted by Lionardo.

† Wild as this project must have appeared, it was not perhaps impossible. In our days the Sunderland Lighthouse was lifted from its foundations, and removed to a distance of several yards.

which would have added greatly to the commercial advantages of Florence.*

It happened about this time that a peasant on the estate of Piero da Vinci brought him a circular piece of wood, cut horizontally from the trunk of a very large old fig-tree, which had been lately felled, and begged to have something painted on it as an ornament for his cottage. The man being an especial favourite, Piero desired his son Lionardo to gratify his request; and Lionardo, inspired by that wildness of fancy which was one of his characteristics, took the panel into his own room, and resolved to astonish his father by a most unlooked-for proof of his art. He determined to compose something which should have an effect similar to that of the Medusa on the shield of Perseus, and almost petrify beholders. Aided by his recent studies in natural history, he collected together from the neighbouring swamps and the river-mud all kinds of hideous reptiles, as adders, lizards, toads, serpents; insects, as moths, locusts; and other crawling and flying obscene and obnoxious things; and out of these he compounded a sort of monster or chimera, which he represented as about to issue from the shield, with eyes flashing fire, and of an aspect so fearful and abominable that it seemed to infect the very air around. When finished, he led his father into the room in which it was placed, and the terror and horror of

* This project was carried into execution 200 years later.

Piero proved the success of his attempt. This production, afterwards known as the Rotello del Fico,* from the material on which it was painted, was sold by Piero secretly for one hundred ducats, to a merchant, who carried it to Milan, and sold it to the duke for three hundred. To the poor peasant thus cheated of his Rotello, Piero gave a wooden shield, on which was painted a heart transfixed by a dart; a device better suited to his taste and comprehension. In the subsequent troubles of Milan, Lionardo's picture disappeared, and was probably destroyed as an object of horror, by those who did not understand its value as a work of art.

The anomalous monster represented on the Rotello was wholly different from the Medusa, afterwards painted by Lionardo, and now existing in the Florence Gallery. It represents the severed head of Medusa, seen foreshortened, lying on a fragment of rock: the features are beautiful and regular; the hair already metamorphosed into serpents—

> "which curl and flow,
> And their long tangles in each other lock,
> And with unending involutions show
> Their mailed radiance."

Those who have once seen this terrible and fascinating picture can never forget it. The ghastly head seems to expire, and the serpents to crawl into glittering life, as we look upon it.

* *Rotello* means a shield or buckler; *Fico*, a fig-tree.

During this first period of his life, which was wholly passed in Florence and its neighbourhood, Lionardo painted several other pictures of a very different character, and designed some beautiful cartoons of sacred and mythological subjects, which showed that his sense of the beautiful, the elevated, and the graceful, was not less a part of his mind than that eccentricity and almost perversion of fancy which made him delight in sketching ugly, exaggerated caricatures, and representing the deformed and the terrible.

Lionardo da Vinci was now about thirty years old, in the prime of his life and talents. His taste for pleasure and expense was, however, equal to his genius and indefatigable industry; and anxious to secure a certain provision for the future, as well as a wider field for the exercise of his various talents, he accepted the invitation of Ludovico Sforza il Moro, then regent, afterwards Duke of Milan, to reside in his court, and to execute a colossal equestrian statue of his ancestor Francesco Sforza. Here begins the second period of his artistic career, which includes his sojourn at Milan, that is, from 1483 to 1499.

Vasari says that Lionardo was invited to the court of Milan for the Duke Lodovico's amusement, "as a musician and performer on the lyre, and as the greatest singer and *improvisatore* of his time;" but this is improbable. Lionardo, in his long letter

to that prince, in which he recites his own qualifications for employment, dwells chiefly on his skill in engineering and fortification; and sums up his pretensions as an artist in these few brief words:—"I understand the different modes of sculpture in marble, bronze, and terra-cotta. In painting, also, I may esteem myself equal to any one, let him be who he may." Of his musical talents he makes no mention whatever, though undoubtedly these, as well as his other social accomplishments, his handsome person, his winning address, his wit and eloquence, recommended him to the notice of the prince, by whom he was greatly beloved, and in whose service he remained for about seventeen years. It is not necessary, nor would it be possible here, to give a particular account of all the works in which Lionardo was engaged for his patron,* nor of the great political events in which he was involved, more by his position than by his inclination; for instance, the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. of France, and the subsequent invasion of Milan by Louis XII., which ended in the destruction of the Duke Ludovico. We shall only mention a few of the pictures he executed. One of these, the portrait of Lucrezia Crivelli, is now in the Louvre (No. 1091). Another was the Nativity of our

* Of these, the canal of the Martesana, as well from its utility as from the difficulties he surmounted in its execution, would have been sufficient to immortalize him.

Saviour, in the imperial collection at Vienna; but the greatest work of all, and by far the grandest picture which, up to that time, had been executed in Italy, was the Last Supper, painted on the wall of the refectory, or dining-room, of the Dominican convent of the Madonna delle Grazie. It occupied the painter about two years. Of this magnificent creation of art only the mouldering remains are now visible. It has been so often repaired, that almost every vestige of the original painting is annihilated; but from the multiplicity of descriptions, engravings, and copies that exist, no picture is more universally known and celebrated.

The moment selected by the painter is described in the 26th chapter of St. Matthew, 21st and 22nd verses: "And as they did eat, he said, Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me: and they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?" The knowledge of character displayed in the heads of the different apostles is even more wonderful than the skilful arrangement of the figures and the amazing beauty of the workmanship. The space occupied by the picture is a wall 28 feet in length, and the figures are larger than life. The best judgment we can now form of its merits is from the fine copy executed by one of Lionardo's best pupils, Marco Uggione, for the Certosa at Pavia, and now in London, in the collection of the Royal

Academy. Eleven other copies, by various pupils of Lionardo, painted either during his life-time or within a few years after his death, while the picture was in perfect preservation, exist in different churches and collections.

Of the grand equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza, Lionardo never finished more than the model in clay, which was considered a master-piece. Some years afterwards (in 1499), when Milan was invaded by the French, it was used as a target by the Gascon bowmen, and completely destroyed. The profound anatomical studies which Lionardo made for this work still exist.

In the year 1500, the French being in possession of Milan, his patron Lodovico in captivity, and the affairs of the state in utter confusion, Lionardo returned to his native Florence, where he hoped to re-establish his broken fortunes, and to find employment. Here begins the third period of his artistic life, from 1500 to 1513, that is, from his forty-eighth to his sixtieth year. He found the Medici family in exile, but was received by Pietro Soderini (who governed the city as "*Gonfaloniere perpetuo*") with great distinction, and a pension was assigned to him as painter in the service of the republic.

Then began the rivalry between Lionardo and Michael Angelo, which lasted during the remainder of Lionardo's life. The difference of age (for

Michael Angelo was twenty-two years younger) ought to have prevented all unseemly jealousy: but Michael Angelo was haughty and impatient of all superiority, or even equality; Lionardo, sensitive, capricious, and naturally disinclined to admit the pretensions of a rival, to whom he could say, and *did* say, "I was famous before you were born!" With all their admiration of each other's genius, their mutual frailties prevented any real good-will on either side. The two painters competed for the honour of painting in fresco one side of the great Council-hall in the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence. Each prepared his cartoon; each, emulous of the fame and conscious of the abilities of his rival, threw all his best powers into his work. Lionardo chose for his subject the Defeat of the Milanese general Niccolò Piccinino by the Florentine army in 1440. One of the finest groups represented a combat of cavalry disputing the possession of a standard. "It was so wonderfully executed, that the horses themselves seemed animated by the same fury as their riders; nor is it possible to describe the variety of attitudes, the splendour of the dresses and armour of the warriors, nor the incredible skill displayed in the forms and actions of the horses."

Michael Angelo chose for his subject the moment before the same battle, when a party of Florentine soldiers bathing in the Arno are surprised by the sound of the trumpet calling them to arms. Of this

cartoon we shall have more to say in treating of his life. The preference was given to Lionardo da Vinci. But, as Vasari relates, he spent so much time in trying experiments, and in preparing the wall to receive oil-painting, which he preferred to fresco, that in the interval some changes in the government intervened, and the design was abandoned. The two cartoons remained for several years open to the public, and artists flocked from every part of Italy to study them. Subsequently they were cut up into separate parts, dispersed, and lost. It is curious that of Michael Angelo's composition only one small copy exists; of Lionardo's, not one. From a fragment which existed in his time, but which has since disappeared, Rubens made a fine drawing, which was engraved by Edelinck, and is known as the Battle of the Standard.

It was a reproach against Lionardo, in his own time, that he began many things and finished few; that his magnificent designs and projects, whether in art or mechanics, were seldom completed. This may be a subject of regret, but it is unjust to make it a reproach. It was in the nature of the man. The grasp of his mind was so nearly superhuman, that he never, in anything he effected, satisfied himself or realized his own vast conceptions. The most exquisitely finished of his works, those that in the perfection of the execution have excited the wonder and despair of succeeding artists, were put



St. Anna. From the collection in the Louvre.

aside by him as unfinished sketches. Most of the pictures now attributed to him were wholly or in part painted by his scholars and imitators from his cartoons. One of the most famous of these was designed for the altar-piece of the church of the convent called the Nunziata. It represented the Virgin Mary seated in the lap of her mother St. Anna, having in her arms the infant Christ, while St. John is playing with a lamb at their feet; St. Anna, looking on with a tender smile, rejoices in her divine offspring; the figures were drawn with such skill, and the various expressions proper to each conveyed with such inimitable truth and grace, that when exhibited in a chamber of the convent, the inhabitants of the city flocked to see it, and for two days the streets were crowded with people, "as if it had been some solemn festival;" but the picture was never painted, and the monks of the Nunziata, after waiting long and in vain for their altar-piece, were obliged to employ other artists. The cartoon, or a very fine repetition of it, is now in the possession of our Royal Academy, and it must not be confounded with the St. Anna in the Louvre, a more fantastic and apparently an earlier composition.

Lionardo, during his stay at Florence, painted the portrait of Ginevra Benci, already mentioned in the memoir of Ghirlandajo, as the reigning beauty of her time; and also the portrait of Mona Lisa

del Giocondo, sometimes called La Joconde. On this last picture he worked at intervals for four years, but was still unsatisfied. It was purchased by Francis I. for four thousand golden crowns, and is now in the Louvre. We find Lionardo also engaged by Cæsar Borgia to visit and report on the fortifications of his territories, and in this office he was employed for two years. In 1514 he was invited to Rome by Leo X., but more in his character of philosopher, mechanic, and alchemist, than as a painter. Here he found Raphael at the height of his fame, and then engaged in his greatest works—the frescoes of the Vatican. Two pictures which Lionardo painted while at Rome—the Madonna of St. Onofrio, and the Holy Family, painted for Filiberta of Savoy, the pope's sister-in-law (which is now at St. Petersburg)—show that even this veteran in art felt the irresistible influence of the genius of his young rival. They are both *Raffaellesque* in the subject and treatment.

It appears that Lionardo was ill-satisfied with his sojourn at Rome. He had long been accustomed to hold the first rank as an artist wherever he resided; whereas at Rome he found himself only one among many who, if they acknowledged his greatness, affected to consider his day as past. He was conscious that many of the improvements in the arts which were now brought into use, and which enabled the painters of the day to produce such

extraordinary effects, were invented or introduced by himself. If he could no longer assert that measureless superiority over all others which he had done in his younger days, it was because he himself had opened to them new paths to excellence. The arrival of his old competitor Michael Angelo, and some slight on the part of Leo X., who was annoyed by his speculative and dilatory habits in executing the works intrusted to him, all added to his irritation and disgust. He left Rome, and set out for Pavia, where the French king Francis I. then held his court. He was received by the young monarch with every mark of respect, loaded with favours, and a pension of 700 gold crowns settled on him for life. At the famous conference between Francis I. and Leo X. at Bologna, Lionardo attended his new patron, and was of essential service to him on that occasion. In the following year, 1516, he returned with Francis I. to France, and was attached to the French court as principal painter. It appears, however, that during his residence in France he did not paint a single picture. His health had begun to decline from the time he left Italy; and feeling his end approach, he prepared himself for it by religious meditation, by acts of charity, and by a most conscientious distribution by will of all his worldly possessions to his relatives and friends. At length, after protracted suffering, this great and most extraordinary man died at

Cloux, near Amboise, on the 2nd of May, 1519, being then in his sixty-seventh year. It is to be regretted that we cannot wholly credit the beautiful story of his dying in the arms of Francis I., who, as it is said, had come to visit him on his deathbed. It would indeed have been, as Fuseli expressed it, "an honour to the king, by which Destiny would have atoned to that monarch for his future disaster at Pavia," had the incident really happened, as it has been so often related by biographers, celebrated by poets, represented with a just pride by painters, and willingly believed by all the world; but the well-authenticated fact that the court was *on that day* at St. Germain-en-Laye, whence the royal ordinances are dated, renders the story, unhappily, very doubtful.

We have mentioned a few of the genuine works of Lionardo da Vinci; they are exceedingly rare. It appears certain that not one-third of the pictures attributed to him and bearing his name were the production of his own hand, though they were the creation of his mind, for he generally furnished the cartoons or designs from which his pupils executed pictures of various degrees of excellence.

Thus the admirable picture in our National Gallery of Christ disputing with the Doctors, though undoubtedly designed by Lionardo, is supposed by some to be executed by his best scholar, Bernardino Luini; by others it is attributed to Francesco

Melzi. Those ruined pictures which bear his name at Windsor and at Hampton Court are from the Milanese school.*

Of nine pictures in the Louvre attributed to Lionardo, three only—the St. John, and the two famous portraits of the Mona Lisa and Lucrezia Crivelli—are considered genuine. The others are from his designs and from his school.

In the Florentine Gallery the Medusa is certainly genuine; but the famous Herodias holding the dish to receive the head of John the Baptist, was probably painted from his cartoon by Luini. His own portrait, in the same gallery (in the Salle des Peintres), is wonderfully fine; indeed the finest of all, and the one which at once attracts and fixes attention.

In the Milan collections are many pictures attributed to him: a few are in private collections in England: Lord Ashburton has an exquisite group of the Infant Christ and St. John playing with a lamb, and there is a small Madonna in Lord Shrewsbury's gallery at Alton Towers.

But it is the MS. notes and designs left behind him that give us the best idea of the indefatigable industry of this "myriad-minded man," and the

* The Falconer at Windsor I believe to be by Holbein, and it is curious that this is not the first nor only Holbein which has been attributed to Lionardo. There is one in the Liverpool Institute, and I have known others.

almost incredible extent of his acquirements. In the Ambrosian Library at Milan there are twelve huge volumes of his works relative to arts, chemistry, mathematics, &c.; one of them contains a collection of anatomical drawings, which the celebrated anatomist Dr. Hunter described as the most wonderful things of the kind for accuracy and beauty that he had ever beheld. In the Royal Library at Windsor there are three volumes of MSS. and drawings, containing a vast variety of subjects—portraits, heads, groups, and single figures; fine anatomical studies of horses; a battle of elephants, full of spirit; drawings in optics, hydraulics, and perspective; plans of military machines, maps and surveys of rivers; beautiful and accurate drawings of plants and rocks, to be introduced into his pictures; musical airs noted in his own hand, perhaps his own compositions; anatomical subjects, with elaborate notes and explanations. In the Royal Library at Paris there is a volume of philosophical treatises, from which extracts have been published by Venturi. In the Holkham Collection is a MS. treatise on hydraulics. The 'Treatise on Painting,' by Lionardi da Vinci, has been translated from the original Italian into French, English, and German, and is the foundation of all that has since been written on the subject, whether relating to the theory or to the practice of the art. His MSS. are particularly difficult to read or de-

cipher, as he had a habit of writing from right to left, instead of from left to right. What was his reason for this singularity has not been explained.

The scholars of Lionardo da Vinci, and those artists formed in the Academy which he founded in Milan, under the patronage of Ludovico il Moro, comprise that school of art known as the Milanese or Lombard School. They are distinguished by a lengthy and graceful style of drawing, a particular amenity and sweetness of expression (which in the inferior painters degenerated into affectation and a sort of vapid smile), and particularly by the transparent lights and shadows—the *chiaroscuro*, of which Lionardo was the inventor or discoverer. The most eminent painters were Bernardino Luini; Marco Uggione, or D'Oggioni; Antonio Beltraffio; Francesco Melzi; and Andrea Salai. All these studied under the immediate tuition of Lionardo, and painted most of the pictures ascribed to him. Gaudenzio Ferrari and Cesare da Sesto imitated him, and owed their celebrity to his influence.

MICHAEL ANGELO:

Born 1474; died 1564.

We have spoken of Lionardo da Vinci. Michael Angelo, the other great luminary of art, was twenty-two years younger; but the more severe and reflective cast of his mind rendered their difference of age far less in effect than in reality. It is usual to compare Michael Angelo with Raphael, but he is more aptly compared with Lionardo da Vinci. All the great artists of that time, even Raphael himself, were influenced more or less by these two extraordinary men, but they exercised no influence on each other. They started from opposite points; they pursued throughout their whole existence, and in all they planned and achieved, a course as different as their respective characters. It would be very curious and interesting to carry out the comparison in detail; to show the contrast in organization, in temper, in talent, in taste, which existed between men so highly and so equally endowed, but our limits forbid this indulgence. We shall therefore only observe here, that considered as artists, they emulated each other in variety of power, but that Lionardo was more the painter than the sculp-

tor and architect; Michael Angelo was more the sculptor and architect than the painter. Both sought true inspiration in Nature, but they beheld her with different eyes: Lionardo, who designed admirably, appears to have seen no *outline* in objects, and laboured all his life to convey, by colour and light and shade, the impression of beauty and the illusive effect of rotundity. He preferred the use of oil to fresco, because the mellow smoothness and transparency of the vehicle was more capable of giving the effects he desired. Michael Angelo, on the contrary, turned his whole attention to the definition of *form*, and the expression of life and power through action and movement; he regarded the illusive effects of painting as meretricious and beneath his notice, and despised oil-painting as a style for women and children. Considered as men, both were as high-minded and generous as they were gifted and original; but the former was as remarkable for his versatile and social accomplishments, his love of pleasure and habits of expense, as the latter for his stern inflexible temper, and his temperate, frugal, and secluded habits.

Michael Angelo Buonaroti was born at Settignano, near Florence, in the year 1474. He was descended from a family once noble—even amongst the noblest of the feudal lords of northern Italy—the Counts of Canossa; but that branch of it represented by his father, Luigi Lionardo Buonaroti

Simoni, had for some generations become poorer and poorer, until the last descendant was thankful to accept an office in the law, and had been nominated magistrate or mayor (*Podesta*) of Chiusi. In this situation he had limited his ambition to the prospect of seeing his eldest son a notary or advocate in his native city. The young Michael Angelo showed the utmost distaste for the studies allotted to him, and was continually escaping from his home and from his desk to haunt the atteliers of the painters, particularly that of Ghirlandajo, who was then at the height of his reputation, and of whom some account has been already given.

The father of Michael Angelo, who found his family increase too rapidly for his means, had destined some of his sons for commerce (it will be recollected that in Genoa and Florence the most powerful nobles were merchants or manufacturers), and others for civil or diplomatic employments: but the fine arts, as being at that time productive of little honour or emolument, he held in no esteem, and treated these tastes of his eldest son sometimes with contempt and sometimes even with harshness. Michael Angelo, however, had formed some friendships among the young painters, and particularly with Francesco Granacci, one of the best pupils of Ghirlandajo; he contrived to borrow models and drawings, and studied them in secret with such persevering assiduity and consequent improvement that



Michael Angelo.

Ghirlandajo, captivated by his genius, undertook to plead his cause to his father, and at length prevailed over the old man's family pride and prejudices. At the age of fourteen Michael Angelo was received into the studio of Ghirlandajo as a regular pupil, and bound to him for three years; and such was the precocious talent of the boy, that instead of being paid for his instruction, Ghirlandajo undertook to pay the father, Lionardo Buonaroti, for the first, second, and third years, six, eight, and twelve golden florins, as payment for the advantage he expected to derive from the labour of the son. Thus was the vocation of the young artist decided for life.

At that time Lorenzo the Magnificent reigned over Florence. He had formed in his palace and gardens a collection of antique marbles, busts, statues, fragments, which he had converted into an academy for the use of young artists, placing at the head of it as director a sculptor of some eminence named Bertoldo. Michael Angelo was one of the first who, through the recommendation of Ghirlandajo, was received into this new academy, afterwards so famous and so memorable in the history of art. The young man, then not quite sixteen, had hitherto occupied himself chiefly in drawing; but now, fired by the beauties he beheld around him, and by the example and success of a fellow-pupil, Torregiano, he set himself to model in clay, and at

length to copy in marble what was before him; but, as was natural in a character and genius so steeped in individuality, his copies became not so much imitations of form as original embodyings of the leading idea, and Lorenzo de' Medici, struck by his extraordinary power, sent for his father and offered to attach the boy to his own particular service, and to undertake the entire care of his education. The father consented, on condition of receiving for himself an office under the government, and thenceforth Michael Angelo was lodged in the palace of the Medici and treated by Lorenzo as his son.

Such sudden and increasing favour excited the envy and jealousy of his companions, particularly of Torregiano, who, being of a violent and arrogant temper (that of Michael Angelo was by no means conciliating), sought every means of showing his hatred. On one occasion a quarrel having ensued while they were at work together, Torregiano turned in fury and struck his rival a blow with his mallet, which disfigured him for life. His nose was flattened to his face, and Torregiano, having by this "sacrilegious stroke" gratified his hatred, was banished from Florence.

It is fair, however, to give Torregiano's own account of this incident as he related it to Benvenuto Cellini, many years afterwards.—"This Buonaroti and I, when we were young men, went to study in the church of the Carmelites, in the

chapel of Masaccio: it was customary with Buonaroti to rally those who were learning to draw there. One day, among others, a sarcasm of his having stung me to the quick, I was extremely irritated, and doubling my fist gave him such a violent blow on the nose that I felt the bone and cartilage yield as if they had been made of paste, and the mark I then gave him he will carry to his grave."

Thus it appears that the blow was not unprovoked, and that Michael Angelo, even at the age of sixteen, indulged in that contemptuous arrogance and sarcastic speech which, in his maturer age, made him so many enemies:—but to return.

Michael Angelo continued his studies under the auspices of Lorenzo; but just as he had reached his eighteenth year he lost his generous patron, his second father, and was thenceforth thrown on his own resources. It is true that the son of Lorenzo, Piero de' Medici, continued to extend his favour to the young artist, but with so little comprehension of his genius and character, that on one occasion, during a severe winter, he set him to form a statue of snow for the amusement of his guests.

Michael Angelo, while he yielded, perforce, to the caprices of his protector, turned the energies of his mind to a new study—that of anatomy—and pursued it with all that fervour which belonged to his character. His attention was at the same time

directed to literature, by the counsels and conversations of a very celebrated scholar and poet, then residing in the court of Piero—Angelo Poliziano; and he pursued at the same time the cultivation of his mind, and the practice of his art. Engrossed by his own studies, he was scarcely aware of what was passing around him, nor of the popular intrigues which were preparing the ruin of the Medici; suddenly this powerful family were flung from sovereignty to temporary disgrace and exile; and Michael Angelo, as one of their retainers, was obliged to fly from Florence, and took refuge in the city of Bologna. During the year he spent there he found a friend, who employed him on some works of sculpture; and on his return to Florence he executed a Cupid in marble, of such beauty that it found its way into the cabinet of the Duchess of Mantua as a real antique. On the discovery that the author of this beautiful statue was a young man of two-and-twenty, the Cardinal San Giorgio invited him to Rome, and for some time lodged him in his palace. Here Michael Angelo, surrounded and inspired by the grand remains of antiquity, pursued his studies with unceasing energy: he produced a statue of Bacchus, which added to his reputation; and the group of the dead Christ on the knees of his Virgin Mother (called *the Pietà*), which is now in the

church of St. Peter's at Rome:* this last, being frequently copied and imitated, obtained him so much applause and reputation, that he was recalled to Florence, to undertake several public works, and found himself once more established in his native city about the year 1504.

Hitherto we have seen Michael Angelo wholly devoted to the study and practice of sculpture; but soon after his return to Florence he was called upon to compete with Lionardo da Vinci in executing the cartoons for the frescoes with which it was intended to decorate the walls of the Palazzo Vecchio, or town-hall of Florence. The cartoon of Lionardo has been already described: that of Michael Angelo represented an incident which occurred during the siege of Pisa—a group of Florentine soldiers bathing in the Arno hear the

* This Pietà is the only work whereon Michael Angelo inscribed his name, which he has carved distinctly on the girdle of the Virgin. The circumstance which induced him to do this is curious. Some time after the group was fixed in its place, he was standing before it considering its effect, when two strangers entered the church, and began, even in his hearing, to dispute concerning the author of the work, which they agreed in exalting to the skies as a masterpiece. One of them, who was a Bolognese, insisted that it was by a sculptor of Bologna, whom he named. Michael Angelo listened in silence, and the next night, when all slept, he entered the church, and by the light of a lantern engraved his name, in deep indelible characters, where it might best be seen.

trumpet which proclaims a sortie of the enemy, and spring at once to the combat. He chose this subject perhaps as affording ample opportunity to exhibit his peculiar and wonderful skill in designing the human figure. All is life and movement. The warriors, some already clothed, but the greater part undressed, hasten to obey the call to battle; they are seen clambering up the banks—buckling on their armour—rushing forward, hurriedly, eagerly. There are, altogether, about thirty figures, the size of life, drawn with black chalk, and relieved with white. This cartoon was regarded by his contemporaries as the most perfect of his works; that is, in respect to the execution merely: as to subject, sentiment, and character, it would not certainly rank with the finest of his works; for, with every possible variety of gesture and attitude, exhibited with admirable and life-like energy and the most consummate knowledge of form, there was only one expression throughout, and that the least intellectual, majestic, or interesting—the expression of hurry and surprise. While this great work existed, it was a study for all the young artists of Italy: but Michael Angelo, who had suffered in person from the jealousy of one rival, was destined to suffer yet more cruelly from the envy of another. It is said that Bandinelli, the sculptor, profited by the troubles of Florence to tear in pieces this monument of the

glory and genius of a man he detested; but in doing so he has only left an enduring stain upon his own fame. A small old copy of the principal part of the composition exists in the collection of the Earl of Leicester, at Holkham, and has been finely engraved by Schiavonetti.

The next work in which Michael Angelo was engaged was the tomb of Pope Julius II., who, while living, had conceived the idea of erecting a most splendid monument to perpetuate his memory. For this work, which was never completed, Michael Angelo executed the famous statue of Moses, seated, grasping his flowing beard with one hand, and with the other sustaining the tables of the law. While employed on this tomb, the pope commanded him to undertake also the decoration of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The reader may remember that Pope Sixtus IV., in the year 1473, erected his famous chapel, and summoned the best painters of that time, Signorelli, Cosimo Roselli, Perugino, and Ghirlandajo, to decorate the interior: but down to the year 1508 the ceiling remained without any ornament; and Michael Angelo was called upon to cover this enormous vault, a space of one hundred and fifty feet in length by fifty in breadth, with a series of subjects, representing the most important events connected, either literally or typically, with the fall and redemption of mankind.

No part of Michael Angelo's long life is so interesting, so full of characteristic incident, as the history of his intercourse with Pope Julius II., which began in 1505, and ended only with the death of the pope in 1513.

Michael Angelo had at all times a lofty idea of his own dignity as an artist, and never would stoop either to flatter a patron or to conciliate a rival. Julius II., though now seventy-four, was as impatient of contradiction, as fiery in temper, as full of magnificent and ambitious projects as if he had been in the prime of life; in his service was the famous architect Bramante, who beheld with jealousy and alarm the increasing fame of Michael Angelo, and his influence with the pontiff; and set himself by indirect means to lessen both. He insinuated to Julius that it was ominous to erect his own mausoleum during his lifetime, and the pope gradually fell off in his attentions to Michael Angelo, and neglected to supply him with the necessary funds for carrying on the work. On one occasion Michael Angelo, finding it difficult to obtain access to the pope, sent a message to him to this effect, "that henceforth, if his holiness desired to see him, he should send to seek him elsewhere:" and the same night, leaving orders with his servants to dispose of his property, he departed for Florence. The pope dispatched five couriers after him with threats, persuasions, promises—but

in vain. He wrote to the Gonfaloniere Soderini, then at the head of the government of Florence, commanding him, on pain of his extreme displeasure, to send Michael Angelo back to him; but the inflexible artist absolutely refused: three months were spent in vain negotiations. Soderini at length, fearing the pope's anger, prevailed on Michael Angelo to return, and sent with him his relation Cardinal Soderini to make up the quarrel between the high contending powers. The pope was then at Bologna, and at the moment when Michael Angelo arrived he was at supper; he desired him to be brought into his presence, and on seeing him exclaimed in a transport of fury, "Instead of obeying our commands and coming to us, thou hast waited till we came in search of thee!" (Bologna being much nearer to Florence than to Rome). Michael Angelo fell on his knees, and entreated pardon with a loud voice. "Holy father," said he, "my offence has not arisen from an evil nature; I could no longer endure the insults offered to me in the palace of your holiness!" He remained kneeling, and the pope continued to bend his brows in silence; when a certain bishop, in attendance on the Cardinal Soderini, thinking to mend the matter, interfered with excuses, representing that "Michael Angelo—poor man!—had erred through ignorance; that artists were wont to presume too much on their genius," and so forth.

The irascible pope, interrupting him with a sharp blow across the shoulders with his staff, exclaimed, "It is thou that art ignorant and presuming, to insult him whom we feel ourselves bound to honour; take thyself out of our sight!" And as the terrified prelate stood transfixed with amazement, the pope's attendants forced him out of the room. Julius then, turning to Michael Angelo, gave him his forgiveness and his blessing, and commanded him never again to leave him, promising him on all occasions his favour and protection. This extraordinary scene took place in November, 1506.

The work on the tomb was not, however, immediately resumed. Michael Angelo was commanded to execute a colossal statue of the pope to be erected in front of the principal church of Bologna. He threw into the figure and attitude so much of the haughty and resolute character of the original, that Julius, on seeing the model, asked him with a smile, whether he intended to represent him as blessing or as cursing? To which Michael Angelo prudently replied, that he intended to represent his holiness as admonishing the inhabitants of Bologna to obedience and submission. "And what," said the pope, well pleased, "wilt thou put in the other hand?" "A book, may it please your holiness." "A book, man!" exclaimed the pope, "put rather a sword; thou knowest I am no scholar." The fate of this statue, however we may



From the Vault of the Sistine Chapel.

lament it, was fitting and characteristic: a few years afterwards the populace of Bologna rebelled against the popedom, flung down the statue of Julius, and out of the fragments was constructed a cannon, which from its origin was styled *La Giuliana*.

On his return to Rome, Michael Angelo wished to have resumed his work on the mausoleum; but the pope had resolved on the completion of the Sistine Chapel: he commanded Michael Angelo to undertake the decoration of the vaulted ceiling; and the artist was obliged, though reluctantly, to obey. At this time the frescoes which Raphael and his pupils were painting in the chambers of the Vatican had excited the admiration of all Rome. Michael Angelo, who had never exercised himself in the mechanical part of the art of fresco, invited from Florence several painters of eminence, to execute his designs under his own superintendence; but they could not reach the grandeur of his conceptions, which became enfeebled under their hands; and one morning, in a mood of impatience, he destroyed all that they had done, closed the doors of the chapel against them, and would not thenceforth admit them to his presence. He then shut himself up, and proceeded with incredible perseverance and energy to accomplish his task alone; he even prepared his own colours with his own hands. He began with the end towards the door; and in the two compartments first painted (though

not first in the series), the Deluge, and the Vineyard of Noah, he made the figures too numerous and too small to produce their full effect from below, a fault which he corrected in those executed subsequently. When almost half the work was completed, the pope insisted on viewing what was done, and the astonishment and admiration it excited rendered him more and more eager to have the whole completed at once. The progress, however, was not rapid enough to suit the impatient temper of the pontiff. On one occasion he demanded of the artist *when* he meant to finish it; to which Michael Angelo replied calmly, "When I can." "When thou canst!" exclaimed the fiery old pope: "thou hast a mind that I should have thee thrown from the scaffold!" At length, on the day of All Saints, 1512, the ceiling was uncovered to public view. Michael Angelo had employed on the painting only, without reckoning the time spent in preparing the cartoons, twenty-two months, and he received in payment three thousand crowns.

To describe this grand work in all its details would occupy many pages. It will give some idea of its immensity to say that it contains in all upwards of two hundred figures, the greater part of colossal size; and that with regard to invention, grandeur, and expression, it has been a school for study, and a theme for wonder, during three successive ages.

In the centre of the ceiling are four large compartments and five small ones. In the former are represented the Creation of the Sun and Moon; the Creation of Adam, perhaps the most majestic design that was ever conceived by the genius of man; the Fall and the Expulsion from Paradise; the Deluge. In the five small compartments are represented the Gathering of the Waters (*Gen.* i. 9); the Almighty separating Light from Darkness; the Creation of Eve; the Sacrifice of Noah, and Noah's Vineyard: around these, in the curved part of the ceiling, are the Prophets and the Sibyls who foretold the birth of Christ. These are among the most wonderful forms that modern art has called into life. They are all seated and employed in contemplating books or antique rolls of manuscript, with genii in attendance. These mighty beings sit before us, looking down with solemn meditative aspects, or upwards with inspired looks that see into futurity. All their forms are massive and sublime, all are full of varied and individual character.

Beneath these again are a series of groups representing the earthly genealogy of Christ, in which the figures have a repose, a contemplative grace and tenderness, which place them among the most interesting of all the productions of Michael Angelo. These and the figure of Eve in the Fall show how intense was his feeling of beauty, though

he frequently disdained to avail himself of it. In the four corners of the ceiling are representations of the miraculous deliverance of the people of Israel in allusion to the general Redemption of man by the Saviour, viz.: Holofernes vanquished by Judith, David overcoming Goliath, the Brazen Serpent, and the Punishment of Haman.

There is a small print in Kugler's Hand-book, which will give a general idea of the arrangement of this famous ceiling: there is one on a large scale by Piroli, and a still larger one by Cunego, which, if accessible, will answer the purpose better. In our National School of Design at Somerset House there is an admirable coloured drawing lately brought from Rome by Mr. L. Grüner, which will convey a very correct idea not merely of the arrangement of the subjects and figures, but of the harmonious disposition of the colours—a merit not usually allowed to Michael Angelo.

The collection of engravings after Michael Angelo in the British Museum is very imperfect, but it contains some fine old prints from the Prophets which should be studied by those who wish to understand the true merit of this great master, of whom Sir Joshua Reynolds said that "to kiss the hem of his garment, to catch the slightest of his perfections, would be glory and distinction enough for an ambitious man!"

When the Sistine Chapel was completed Michael

Angelo was in his thirty-ninth year; fifty years of a glorious though troubled career were still before him.

Pope Julius II. died in 1513, and was succeeded by Leo X., the son of Lorenzo the Magnificent. As a Florentine and his father's son, we might naturally have expected that he would have gloried in patronising and employing Michael Angelo; but such was not the case. There was something in the stern, unbending character, and retired and abstemious habits of Michael Angelo, repulsive to the temper of Leo, who preferred the graceful and amiable Raphael, then in the prime of his life and genius: hence arose the memorable rivalry between Michael Angelo and Raphael, which on the part of the latter was merely generous emulation, while it must be confessed that something like bitterness and envy, or at least scorn, mingled with the feelings of Michael Angelo. The pontificate of Leo X., an interval of ten years, was the least productive period of his life. He was sent to Florence, to superintend the building of the church of San Lorenzo and the completion of Santa Croce; but he differed with the pope on the choice of the marble, quarrelled with the officials, and scarcely anything was accomplished. Clement VII., another Medici, was elected pope in 1523. He was the son of that Giuliano de' Medici who was assassinated by the Pazzi in 1478. He had conceived

the idea of consecrating a chapel in the church of San Lorenzo, to receive the tombs of his ancestors and relations, and which should be adorned with all the splendours of art. Michael Angelo planned and built the chapel, and for its interior decoration designed and executed six of his greatest works in sculpture. Two are seated statues: one representing Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino, who died young, in 1519, living only to be the father of Catherine de' Medici (and, as it has been well said, "had an evil spirit assumed the human shape to propagate mischief, he could not have done better"); the other opposite, his cousin Giuliano de' Medici, who was as weak as Lorenzo was vicious. The other four are colossal recumbent figures, entitled the Night, the Morning, the Dawn, and the Twilight; though why so called, and why these figures were introduced in such a situation—what was the intention, the meaning of the artist—does not seem to be understood by any of the critics on art who have written on the subject. The statue of Lorenzo is almost awful in its sullen grandeur. He looks down in a contemplative attitude; hence the appellation by which the figure is known in Italy—Il Pensièro (*Thought* or *Meditation*). But there is mischief in the look—something vague, ominous—difficult to be described. Altogether it well nigh realizes our idea of Milton's Satan, brooding over his infernal plans

for the ruin of mankind. Mr. Rogers styles it truly "the most real and unreal thing that ever came from the chisel." And his description of the whole chapel is as vivid as poetry, and as accurate as truth could make it:

"Nor then forget that chamber of the dead
Where the gigantic shades of Night and Day
Turn'd into stone, rest everlastingly.
There from age to age
Two ghosts are sitting on their sepulchres.
That is the Duke LORENZO. Mark him well!
He meditates; his head upon his hand.
What from beneath his helm-like bonnet scowls?
Is it a face, or but an eyeless skull?
'Tis lost in shade—yet, like the basilisk,
It fascinates and is intolerable."

While Michael Angelo was engaged in these works his progress was interrupted by events which threw all Italy into commotion. Rome was taken and sacked by the Constable de Bourbon in 1537. The Medici were once more expelled from Florence, and Michael Angelo, in the midst of these strange vicissitudes, was employed by the republic to fortify his native city against his former patrons. Great as an engineer as in every other department of art and science, he defended Florence for nine months. At length the city was given up by treachery, and, fearing the vengeance of the conquerors, Michael Angelo fled and concealed himself; but Clement VII. was too sensible of his merit to allow him to remain long in disgrace and

exile. He was pardoned, and continued ever afterwards in high favour with the pope, who employed him on the sculptures in the chapel of San Lorenzo during the remainder of his pontificate.

Clement VII. was succeeded by Pope Paul III., of the Farnese family, in 1534. This pope, though nearly seventy when he was elected, was as anxious to immortalize his name by great undertakings as any of his predecessors had been before him. His first wish was to complete the decoration of the interior of the Sistine Chapel, left unfinished by Julius II. and Leo X. He summoned Michael Angelo, who endeavoured to excuse himself, pleading other engagements; but the pope would listen to no excuses which interfered with his sovereign power to dissolve all other obligations; and thus the artist found himself, after an interval of twenty years, most reluctantly forced to abandon sculpture for painting; and, as Vasari expresses it, he consented to serve Pope Paul only because he *could* not do otherwise.

In representing the Last Judgment on the wall of the upper end of the Sistine Chapel, Michael Angelo only adhered to the original plan as it had been adopted by Julius II., and afterwards by Clement VII.

In the centre of this vast composition he has placed the figure of the Messiah in the act of pro-

nouncing the sentence of condemnation, "Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire;" and by his side the Virgin Mary: around them, on each side, the apostles, the patriarchs, the prophets, and a company of saints and martyrs: above these are groups of angels bearing the cross, the crown of thorns, and other instruments of the passion of our Lord; and farther down another group of angels holding the book of life, and sounding the awful trumpets which call up the dead to judgment. Below, on one side, the resurrection and ascent of the blessed; and on the other, demons drag down the condemned to everlasting fire. The number of figures is at least two hundred. Those who wish to form a correct idea of the composition and arrangement should consult the engravings: several of different sizes and different degrees of excellence are in the British Museum.

There can be no doubt that Michael Angelo's Last Judgment is the grandest picture that ever was painted—the greatest effort of human skill, as a creation of art; yet is it full of faults in taste and sentiment; and the greatest fault of all is in the conception of the principal personage, the Messiah as judge. The figure, expression, attitude, are all unworthy—one might almost say *vulgar* in the worst sense; for is there not both profaneness and vulgarity in representing the merciful Redeemer of mankind, even when he "comes to judgment,"

as inspired merely by wrath and vengeance?—as a thick-set athlete, who, with a gesture of sullen anger, is about to punish the wicked with his fist? It has been already observed that Michael Angelo borrowed the idea of the two figures of the Virgin and Christ from the old fresco of Orcagna in the Campo Santo; but in improving the drawing he has wholly lost and degraded the sentiment. In the groups of the pardoned, as Kugler has well observed, we look in vain for "the glory of heaven —for beings bearing the stamp of divine holiness and renunciation of human weakness: everywhere we meet with the expression of human passion, human efforts; we see no choir of solemn tranquil forms—no harmonious unity of clear grand lines produced by ideal draperies; but in their stead a confused crowd of naked bodies in violent attitudes, unaccompanied by any of the characteristics made sacred by holy tradition." On the other hand, the groups of the condemned, and the astonishing energy and variety of the struggling and suspended forms, are most fearful: and it is quite true that when contemplated from a distance the whole representation fills the mind with wonder and mysterious horror. It was intended to represent the defeat and fall of the rebel angels on the opposite wall (above and on each side of the principal door), but this was never done; and the *intention* of Michael Angelo in the decoration of

the Sistine Chapel remains incomplete. The picture of the Last Judgment was finished and first exhibited to the people on Christmas-day, 1451, under the pontificate of Paul III. Michael Angelo was then in his sixty-seventh year, and had been employed on the painting and cartoons nearly nine years.

The same Pope Paul III. had in the mean time constructed a beautiful chapel, which was called after his name the chapel *Paolina*, and dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul. Michael Angelo was called upon to design the decorations. He painted on one side the Conversion of St. Paul, and on the other the Crucifixion of St. Peter. But these fine paintings—of which existing old engravings (to be found in the British Museum) give a better idea than the blackened and faded remains of the original frescoes—were from the first ill-disposed as to the locality, and badly lighted, and at present they excite little interest compared with the more famous works in the Sistine.

During the period that Michael Angelo was engaged in the decoration of the Pauline Chapel, he executed a group in marble—the Virgin with the dead Redeemer and two other figures—which was never completely finished. It is now at Florence behind the high altar of the church of Santa Croce. It is full of tragic grandeur and expression.*

* An eye-witness has left us a very graphic description of the energy with which, even in old age, Michael Angelo handled his chisel:—"I can say that I have seen Michael

With the frescoes in the Pauline Chapel ends Michael Angelo's career as a painter. During the remainder of his life, a period of sixteen years, we find him wholly devoted to architecture. His vast and daring genius finding ample scope in the completion of St. Peter's, he has left behind him in his capacity of architect yet greater marvels than he had achieved as painter and sculptor. Who that has seen the cupola of St. Peter's soaring into the skies, but will think almost with awe of the universal and majestic intellect of the man who reared it?

There is a striking anecdote of Mrs. Siddons, which at this moment comes back upon the mind. When standing before the Apollo Belvedere, then in the gallery of the Louvre, she exclaimed, after a long pause, "How great must be the Being who created the genius which produced such a form as this!"—a thought characteristic of her mind, but more fitly inspired by the works of Michael Angelo than by those of any artist the world has yet seen. They bear impressed upon them a character of greatness, of durability, of sublimity of invention

Angelo at the age of sixty, and with a body announcing weakness, make more chips of marble fly about in a quarter of an hour than would three of the strongest young sculptors in an hour,—a thing almost incredible to him who has not beheld it. He went to work with such impetuosity and fury of manner, that I feared almost every moment to see the block split into pieces. It would seem as if, inflamed by the idea of greatness which inspired him, this great man attacked with a species of fury the marble which concealed the statue."—*Blaise de Vigenère.*

and consummate skill in contrivance, which fills the contemplative mind, and leads it irresistibly from the created up to the Creator.

As our subject is painting, not architecture, we shall not dwell much on this period of the life of Michael Angelo. In the year 1544, being then in his seventy-second year, he was appointed to the office of chief architect of St. Peter's by Pope Paul III., and he continued to discharge it through the pontificates of Julius III., Pius IV., and Pius V. He accepted the office with reluctance, pleading his great age and the obstacles and difficulties he was likely to meet with from the jealousies and intrigues of his rivals and the ignorance and intermeddling of the pope's officials. He solemnly called heaven to witness that it was only from a deep sense of duty that he yielded to the pope's wishes; and he proved that this was no empty profession by constantly refusing any salary or remuneration. Notwithstanding the difficulties he encountered, the provocations and the disgusts most intolerable to his haughty and impatient spirit, he held on his way with a stern perseverance till he had seen his great designs so far carried out that they could not be wholly abandoned or perverted by his successors.*

* This, however, applies only to the stupendous dome: his design for the façade, and even the original form of the church, having been subsequently altered.

When his sovereign the Grand Duke of Florence endeavoured, by the most munificent offers and promises, to attract him to his court, he constantly pleaded that to leave his great work unaccomplished would be on his part "a *sin*, a *shame*, and the ruin of the greatest religious monument in Christian Europe." Michael Angelo considered that he was engaged in a work of piety, and for this reason, "for his own honour and the honour of God," he refused all emolument.

It appears, from the evidence of contemporary writers, that in the last years of his life the acknowledged worth and genius of Michael Angelo, his wide-spread fame and his unblemished integrity, combined with his venerable age and the haughtiness and reserve of his deportment to invest him with a sort of princely dignity. It is recorded that when he waited on Pope Julius III. to receive his commands, the pontiff rose on his approach, seated him, in spite of his excuses, on his right hand; and while a crowd of cardinals, prelates, ambassadors, were standing round at humble distance, carried on the conference, as equal with equal. The Grand Duke Cosmo I. always uncovered in his presence, and stood with his hat in his hand while speaking to him.

One of the most beautiful anecdotes recorded of Michael Angelo in his later years, and one of the very few amiable traits in his character, was his

strong and generous attachment to his old servant Urbino. One day as Urbino stood by him while he worked, he said to him, "My poor Urbino! what wilt thou do when I am gone?" "Alas!" replied Urbino, "I must then seek another master!" "No," replied Michael Angelo, "that shall never be!" and he immediately presented him with two thousand crowns, thus rendering him independent of himself and others. Urbino, however, continued in his service, and when seized with his last illness, Michael Angelo, the stern, the sarcastic, the overbearing Michael Angelo, nursed him with the tenderness and patience of a mother, sleeping in his clothes on a couch that he might be ever near him. The old man died at last, leaving his master almost inconsolable. "My Urbino is dead," he writes to Vasari, "to my infinite grief and sorrow. Living, he served me truly, and in his death he taught me how to die. I have now no other hope than to rejoin him in Paradise!"

The arrogance imputed to Michael Angelo seems rather to have arisen from a contempt for others than from any overweening opinion of himself. He was too proud to be vain. He had placed his standard of perfection so high, that to the latest hour of his life he considered himself as striving after that ideal excellence which had been revealed to him, but to which he conceived that others were blind or indifferent. In allusion to his own im-

perfections he made a drawing, since become famous, which represents an aged man in a go-cart, and underneath the words "*Ancora impara*" ("still learning").

He continued to labour unremittingly, and with the same resolute energy of mind and purpose, till the gradual decay of his strength warned him of his approaching end. He did not suffer from any particular malady, and his mind was strong and clear to the last. He died at Rome, on the 17th of February, 1563, in the eighty-ninth year of his age. A few days before his death, he dictated his will in these few simple words: "I bequeath my soul to God, my body to the earth, and my possessions to my nearest relations." His nephew, Lionardo Buonaroti, who was his principal heir, by the orders of the Grand Duke Cosmo had his remains secretly conveyed out of Rome and brought to Florence; they were with due honours deposited in the church of Santa Croce, under a costly monument, on which we may see his noble bust surrounded by three very common-place and ill-executed statues representing the arts in which he excelled—Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture. They might have added *Poetry;* for Michael Angelo was so fine a poet that his productions would have given him fame, though he had never peopled the Sistine with his giant creations, nor



From the Sistine Chapel.

"*suspended the Pantheon in the air.*"* The object to whom his poems are chiefly addressed, Vittoria Colonna, Marchioness of Pescara, was the widow of the celebrated commander who overcame Francis I. at the battle of Pavia; herself a poetess, and one of the most celebrated women of her time for beauty, talents, virtue, and piety. She died in 1547. Several of Michael Angelo's sonnets have been translated by Wordsworth, and a selection of his poems, with a very learned and eloquent introduction, has been published by Mr. John Edward Taylor, in a little volume entitled 'Michael Angelo a Poet.'

It must be borne in recollection that the pictures ascribed to Michael Angelo in catalogues and picture galleries are in every instance copies made by his scholars from his designs and models. Only one easel picture is acknowledged as the genuine production of his hand. It is a Holy Family in the Florentine gallery, which as a composition is very exaggerated and ungraceful, and in colour hard and violent; it is painted in distemper, varnished; not in oils, as some have supposed.

MARCELLO VENUSTI was continually employed

* The dome of the Pantheon, which appears self-sustained, had, from the time of Augustus Cæsar, attracted the wonder and admiration of all beholders as a marvel of scientific architecture. Michael Angelo had said, on some occasion, "I will take the Pantheon and suspend it in the air;" and he did so.

in executing small pictures from celebrated cartoons of Michael Angelo; and the diminutive size, and soft, neat, delicate execution, form a singular contrast with the sublimity of the composition and the grand massive drawing of the figures. One of these subjects is the Virgin seated at the foot of the Cross, holding on her lap the dead Redeemer, whose arms are supported by two angels: innumerable duplicates and engravings exist of this composition (one exquisite example is in the Queen's gallery in Buckingham Palace); also of the Christ on the Cross, with the Virgin and St. John standing and two angels looking out of the sky behind, with an expression of intense anguish: (one of these, a very fine example, was lately sold in the Lucca gallery). Another is Il Silenzio, *The Silence;* the Virgin is represented with the infant Christ lying across her knee, with his arm hanging down; she has a book in one hand: behind her on one side is the young St. John in the panther's skin, with his finger on his lips; on the other, St. Joseph. The Annunciation, in which the figure of the Virgin is particularly majestic, is a fourth. Copies of these subjects, with trifling variations, are to be found in many galleries, and the engravings of all are in the British Museum.

Sebastian del Piombo was another artist who painted under the direction and from the cartoons of Michael Angelo, and the most famous example



Group from the Raising of Lazarus, by Sebastian del Piombo.

of this union of talent is the Raising of Lazarus, in our National Gallery. "Sebastian," says Lanzi, "was without the gift of invention, and in compositions of many figures slow and irresolute;" but he was a consummate portrait painter and a most admirable colourist. A Venetian by birth, he had learned the art of colouring under Giorgione. On coming to Rome in 1518, he formed a close intimacy with Michael Angelo: the tradition is, that Michael Angelo associated Sebastiano with himself, and gave him the cartoons of his grand designs, to which the Venetian was to lend the magical hues of his pallette for the purpose of crushing Raphael. If this tradition be true, the failure was signal and deserved; but luckily we are not *obliged* to believe it: it rests on no authority worthy of credit.

GIACOPO PONTORMO painted the Venus and Cupid now at Hampton Court, from a famous cartoon of Michael Angelo; and also a Leda, which is in the National Gallery, and of which the cartoon, by Michael Angelo, is in our Royal Academy.

But the most celebrated and the most independent among the scholars and imitators of Michael Angelo was DANIEL DA VOLTERRA, whose most famous work is the Taking down the Saviour from the Cross, with a number of figures full of energy and movement.

Giorgio Vasari was a pupil and especial favourite of Michael Angelo; he was a painter and architect of second-rate merit. He has, however, earned himself an immortality by his admirable biography of the painters, sculptors, and architects of Italy, from the earliest times to the death of Michael Angelo, whom he survived only ten years. A large picture by Vasari, representing the six great poets of Italy, is in the gallery of Mr. Hope.

It is not necessary to say anything here of the painters who, in the middle of the sixteenth century, and in the lifetime of Michael Angelo, imitated his manner: they were mere journeymen, and, indeed, imitated him most abominably; mistaking extravagance for sublimity, exaggeration for grandeur, and distortion and affectation for energy and passion:—a wretched set! But before we leave Florence, we must speak of one more artist, whose proper place is here, because he was a Florentine, and because he combined in a singular manner the characteristics of the three great men of whom we have last spoken—Leonardo da Vinci, Fra Bartolomeo, and Michael Angelo, without exactly imitating or equalling any one of them. This was Andrea del Sarto, a great artist; but who would have been a far greater artist had he been a better man.



Andrea del Sarto.

ANDREA DEL SARTO:

Born 1488; died 1530.

ANDREA VANNUCHI was the son of a tailor (in Italian *Sarto*), hence the appellation by which he was early known, and has since become celebrated: he was born in 1478, and, like many others, began life as a goldsmith and chaser in metal, but soon turning his attention to painting, and studying indefatigably, he attained so much excellence that he was called in his own time "Andrea senza errori," that is, Andrea *the Faultless*. He is certainly one of the most fascinating of painters, but in all his pictures, even the finest, while we are struck by the elegance of the heads and the majesty of the figures, we feel the want of any real elevation of sentiment and expression. It would be difficult to point out any picture of Andrea del Sarto which has either simplicity or devotional feeling.

A man possessed of genius and industry, loving his art, and crowned with early fame and success, ought to have been through life a prosperous and a happy man. Andrea was neither:—he was miserable, unfortunate, and contemned, through

his own fault or folly. He loved a beautiful woman of infamous character, who was the wife of a hatter; and on the death of her husband, in spite of her bad reputation and the warnings of his best friends, he married her: from that hour he never had a quiet heart, or home, or conscience. He had hitherto supported his old father and mother: she prevailed on him to forsake them. His friends stood aloof, pitying and despising his degradation. His scholars (and formerly the most promising of the young artists of that time had been emulous for the honour of his instructions) now fell off, unable to bear the detestable temper of the woman who governed his house. Tired of this existence, he accepted readily an invitation from Francis I., who, on his arrival at Paris, loaded him with favour and distinction; but after a time, his wife, finding she had no longer the same command over his purse or his proceedings, summoned him to return. He had entered into such engagements with Francis I. that this was not easy; but as he pleaded his domestic position, and promised, and even took an oath on the Gospel, that he would return in a few months, bringing with him his wife, the king gave him licence to depart, and even intrusted him with a large sum of money to be expended in certain specified objects.

Andrea hastened to Florence, and there, under the influence of his infamous wife, he embezzled



St. Joachim, after Andrea del Sarto.



La Madonna del Sacco.

the money, which was wasted in his own and her extravagance; and he never returned to France to keep his oath and engagements. But though he had been weak and wicked enough to commit this crime, he had sufficient sensibility to feel acutely the disgrace which was the consequence; it preyed on his mind and embittered the rest of his life. The avarice and infidelity of his wife added to his sufferings. He continued to paint, however, and improved to the last in correctness of style and beauty of colour.

In the year 1530 he was attacked by a contagious disorder; abandoned on his death-bed by the woman to whom he had sacrificed honour, fame, and friends, he died miserably, and was buried, hastily and without the usual ceremonies of the church, in the same convent of the Nunziata which he had adorned with his works.

Andrea del Sarto can only be estimated as a painter by those who have visited Florence. Fine as are his oil-pictures, his paintings in fresco are still finer. One of these, a Repose of the Holy Family, has been celebrated for the last two centuries, under the title of the *Madonna del Sacco*, because Joseph is represented leaning on a sack. There are engravings of it in the British Museum.

The cloisters of the convent of the Nunziata, and a building called the Scalzo, at Florence, contain his most admired works. His finest picture

in oil is in the Florence Gallery, in the cabinet called the Tribune, where it hangs behind the Venus de' Medici. It represents the Virgin seated on a throne, with St. John the Baptist standing on one side, and St. Francis on the other; a picture of wonderful majesty and beauty. In general his Madonnas are not pleasing; they have, with great beauty, a certain vulgarity of expression, and in his groups he almost always places the Virgin on the ground, either kneeling or sitting. His only model for all his females was his wife; and even when he did not paint from her, she so possessed his thoughts that unconsciously he repeated the same features in every face he drew, whether Virgin, or saint, or goddess. Pictures by Andrea del Sarto are to be found in almost all galleries, but *very* fine examples of his art are rare out of Florence. The picture in our National Gallery attributed to him is very unworthy of his reputation. Those at Hampton Court are not better. There is a fine portrait at Windsor, called the Gardener of the Duke of Florence, attributed to him, and a female head, a sketch full of nature and power. In the Louvre is the picture of Charity, No. 85, painted for Francis I. when Andrea was at Fontainebleau in 1518, and three others. Lord Westminster, Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Munroe of Park Street, and Lord Cowper in his collection at Panshanger, possess the finest exam-

ples of Andrea del Sarto which are in England. At Panshanger there is a very fine portrait of Andrea del Sarto by himself: he is represented as standing by a table at which he has been writing, and looking up from the letter which lies before him: the figure is half-length, and the countenance noble, but profoundly melancholy. One might fancy that he had been writing to his wife.

The illustration represents Joachim, the father of the Virgin Mary, at the moment he presents himself to make his offering in the Temple. On this occasion, according to the story, the priests drove him away with ignominy because he was childless. It is a scene frequently painted by the early masters.

RAPHAEL SANZIO D'URBINO:

Born 1483; died 1520.

WE have spoken at length of two among the great men who influenced the progress of art in the beginning of the sixteenth century—Lionardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo. The third and greatest name was that of RAPHAEL.

In speaking of this wonderful man we shall be more diffuse and enter more into detail than usual. How can we treat in a small compass of him whose fame has filled the universe? In the history of Italian art he stands alone, like Shakspere in the history of our literature; and he takes the same kind of rank, a superiority not merely of degree, but of quality. Everybody has heard of RAPHAEL, everyone has attached some associations of excellence and beauty, more or less defined, to that familiar name: but it is necessary to have studied profoundly the history of art, and to have an intimate acquaintance with the productions of contemporary and succeeding artists, to form any just idea of the wide and lasting influence exercised by this harmonious and powerful genius. His works have been an inexhaustible storehouse of ideas to painters and to poets. Everywhere in art we find



Raphael Sanzio d'Urbino.

his traces. Everywhere we recognise his forms and lines, borrowed or stolen, reproduced, varied, imitated—never improved. Some critic once said, "Show me any sentiment or feeling in any poet, ancient or modern, and I will show you the same thing either as well or better expressed in Shakspere;" in the same manner one might say, "Show me in any painter, ancient or modern, any especial beauty of form, expression, or sentiment, and in some picture, drawing, or print after Raphael, I will show you the same thing as well or better done, and *that* accomplished, which others have only sought or attempted." To complete our idea of this rare union of greatness and versatility as an artist with all that could grace and dignify the man, we must add such personal qualities as very seldom meet in the same individual—a bright, generous, genial, gentle spirit; the most attractive manners, the most winning modesty—

> "His heavenly face the mirror of his mind;
> His mind a temple for all lovely things
> To flock to, and inhabit;"—

and we shall have a picture in our fancy more resembling that of an antique divinity, a young Apollo, than a real human being. There was a vulgar idea at one time prevalent that Raphael was a man of vicious and dissipated habits, and even died a victim to his excesses; this slander has been silenced for ever by indisputable evidence to

the contrary, and now we may reflect with pleasure that nothing rests on surer evidence than the admirable qualities of Raphael; that no earthly renown was ever so unsullied by reproach, so justified by merit, so confirmed by concurrent opinion, so established by time. The short life of Raphael was one of incessant and persevering study: he spent one-half of it in acquiring that practical knowledge and that mechanical dexterity of hand, which were necessary before he could embody in forms and colours the rich creations of his wonderful mind; and when he died, at the age of thirty-seven, he left behind him two hundred and eighty-seven pictures and five hundred and seventy-six drawings and studies. If we reflect for one moment we must be convinced that such a man *could* not have been idle and dissipated: for we must always take into consideration that an excelling painter must be not only a poet in mind, but a ready and perfect artificer; and that, though nature may bestow the "genius and the faculty divine," only time, practice, assiduous industry, can give the exact and cunning hand. "An author," as Richardson observes, "must *think*, but it is no matter what character he writes; he has no care about that, if what he writes be legible. A curious mechanic's hand must be exquisite; but his thoughts may be at liberty." The painter must think and invent with his fancy, and what his fancy

invents his hand must acquire the power to execute, or vain is his power of creative thought. It has been observed—though Raphael was unhappily an exception—that painters are generally long lived and healthy, and that, of all the professors of science and art, they are the least liable to alienation of mind or morbid effects of the brain. One reason may be, that through the union of the opposite faculties of the excursive fancy and mechanic skill—head and hand balancing each other—a sort of harmony in their alternate or coefficient exercise is preserved habitually, which reacts on the whole moral and physical being. As Raphael carried to the highest perfection the union of those faculties of head and hand which constitute the complete artist, so this harmony pervaded his whole being, and nothing deformed or discordant could enter there. In all the portraits which exist of him, from infancy to manhood, there is a divine sweetness and repose; the little cherub face of three years old is not more serene and angelic than the same features at thirty. The child whom father and mother, guardian and stepmother, caressed and idolised in his loving innocence, was the same being whom we see in the prime of manhood subduing and reigning over all hearts, so that, to borrow the words of a contemporary, "not only all men, but the very brutes loved him:" the only

very distinguished man of whom we read who lived and died without an enemy or a detractor!

Raphael Sanzio or Santi was born in the city of Urbino, on Good Friday in the year 1483. His father, Giovanni Santi, was a painter of no mean talent, who held a respectable rank in his native city, and was much esteemed by the Dukes Frederigo and Guidobaldo of Urbino, both of whom played a very important part in the history of Italy between 1474 and 1494. The name of Raphael's mother was Magia, and the house in which he was born is still standing, and regarded by the citizens of Urbino with just veneration. He was only eight years old when he lost his mother, but his father's second wife, Bernardina, well supplied her place, and loved him and tended him as if he had been her own son. His father was his first instructor, and very soon the young pupil was not only able to assist him in his works, but showed such extraordinary talent that Giovanni deemed it right to give him the advantage of better teaching than his own. Perugino was the most celebrated master of that time, and Giovanni travelled to Perugia to make arrangements for placing Raphael under his care, but before these arrangements were completed this good father died, in August, 1494. His wishes were however carried into execution by his widow and by his wife's brother, Simone Ciarla,



Lo Sposalizio.

and Raphael was sent to study under Perugino, in 1495, being then twelve years old.

He remained in this school till he was nearly twenty, and was chiefly employed in assisting his master. A few pictures painted between his sixteenth and twentieth year have been authenticated by careful research, and are very interesting from being essentially characteristic. There is, of course, the manner of his master Perugino, but mingled with some of those qualities which were particularly his own, and which his after life developed into excellence; and nothing in these early pictures is so remarkable as the gradual improvement of his style and his young predilection for his favourite subject, the Madonna and Child. The most celebrated of all his pictures painted in the school of Perugino was one representing the Marriage of the Virgin Mary to Joseph—a subject which is very common in Italian art, and called Lo Sposalizio (the Espousals). This beautiful picture is preserved in the Gallery at Milan. There is a large and fine engraving of it by Longhi, which can be seen in any good print-shop. In the same year that he painted this picture (1504), Raphael visited Florence for the first time. He carried with him a letter of recommendation from Giovanna, Duchess of Sora and sister of the Duke of Urbino, to Soderini, who had succeeded the exiled Medici in the government of Florence.

In this letter the duchess styles him "a discreet and amiable youth," to whom she was attached for his father's sake and for his own good qualities, and she requests that Soderini will favour and aid him in his pursuits. Raphael did not remain long at Florence in this first visit, but he made the acquaintance of Fra Bartolomeo and Ridolfo Ghirlandajo, and saw some cartoons by Lionardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo, which filled his mind with new and bold ideas both of form and composition. In the following year he was employed in executing several large pictures for various churches at Perugia. One of these, a large altar-piece, painted for the church of the Servite, is now at Blenheim; it is full of beauty and dignity; beneath it was a little picture of St. John preaching in the Wilderness, which is in the possession of Lord Lansdowne. About the same time he painted for himself a lovely little miniature called the Dream of the Young Knight, in which he represents a youth armed, who sees in a vision two female figures, one alluring him to pleasure, the other, with a book and sword, inviting him to study and to strive for excellence. This is now in England, in the possession of Lady Sykes. It has been lately engraved in an exquisite style by Mr. L. Grüner.

When he had finished these and other works he returned to Florence, and remained there till 1508.

Some of the most exquisite of his works may be referred to this period of his life, that is, before he was five-and-twenty.

One of these is the Madonna sitting under the Palm-tree, while Joseph presents flowers to the Infant Christ. This may be seen in the Bridgewater Gallery. A second is the Madonna in the possession of Earl Cowper, and now at Panshanger. Another is the famous Madonna in the Florentine Gallery, called the Madonna del Cardellino (the Virgin of the Goldfinch), because the little St. John is presenting a goldfinch to the Infant Christ. Another, as famous, now in the Louvre, called La Belle Jardinière, because the Madonna is seated in a garden amid flowers, with Christ standing at her knee. The St. Catherine in our National Gallery was also painted about the same period; and the little picture of St. George and the Dragon, which Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino, sent as a present to Henry VII., and which is now at St. Petersburg. In this picture St. George is armed with a lance, and has the Garter round his knee, with the inscription "Honi soit qui mal y pense." There is another little St. George in the Louvre, in which the saint is about to slay the dragon with a sword. And there are besides two or three large altar-pieces and some beautiful portraits; in all about thirty pictures painted during the three years he spent at Florence.

Raphael at Rome.

In his twenty-fifth year, when Fra Bartolomeo, Lionardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo were all at the height of their fame, and many years older than himself, the young Raphael had already become celebrated from one end of Italy to the other. At this time Julius II. was pope. Of his extraordinary and energetic character we have already spoken at length in the life of Michael Angelo. At the age of seventy he was revolving plans for the aggrandizement of his power and the embellishment of the Vatican, which it would have taken a long life to realise; conscious that the time before him was to be measured by months rather than by years, and ambitious to concentrate in his own person all the glory that must ensue from such magnificent works, he listened to no obstacles, he would endure no delays, he spared no expense in his undertakings. Bramante, the greatest architect, and Michael Angelo, the greatest sculptor in Italy, were already in his service. Lionardo da Vinci was then employed in public works at Florence, and could not be engaged, and he therefore sent for Raphael to undertake the decoration of those halls in the Vatican which Pope Nicholas V. and Sixtus IV. had begun and left unfinished. The invitation, or rather order, of the pope was as usual so urgent and so peremptory, that Raphael hurried from

Florence, leaving his friends Bartolomeo and Ghirlandajo to complete his unfinished pictures, and immediately on his arrival at Rome he commenced the greatest of his works, the Chambers (*Camere*) of the Vatican.

In general, when Raphael undertook any great work illustrative of sacred or profane history, he did not hesitate to ask advice of his learned and literary friends on points of costume or chronology: but when he began his paintings in the Vatican he was wholly unassisted, and the plan which he laid before the pope, and which was immediately approved and adopted, shows that the grasp and cultivation of his mind equalled his powers as a painter. He dedicated this first saloon, called in Italian the Camera della Segnatura, to the glory of those high intellectual pursuits which may be said to embrace in some form or other all human culture—he represented Theology, Poetry, Philosophy, and Jurisprudence.

And first on the ceiling he painted in four circles four allegorical female figures with characteristic symbols, throned amid clouds, and attended by beautiful genii. Of these the figure of Poetry is distinguished by superior grandeur and inspiration. Beneath these figures and on the four sides of the room he painted four great pictures, each about fifteen feet high by twenty or twenty-five feet wide, the subjects illustrating historically the four allego-

rical figures above. Under Theology he placed the composition called *La Disputa*, i. e. the argument concerning the holy sacrament. In the upper part is the heavenly glory, the Redeemer in the centre, beside him the Virgin-mother. On the right and left, arranged in a semicircle, patriarchs, apostles, and saints, all seated; all full of character, dignity, and a kind of celestial repose befitting their beatitude. Angels are hovering round: four of them, surrounding the emblematic Dove, hold the Gospels. In the lower half of the picture are assembled the celebrated doctors and teachers of the Church, grand, solemn, meditative figures; some searching their books, some lost in thought, some engaged in colloquy sublime. And on each side, a little lower, groups of disciples and listeners, every head and figure a study of character and expression, all different, all full of nature, animation, and significance; and thus the two parts of this magnificent composition, the heavenly beatitude above, the mystery of faith below, combine into one comprehensive whole. This picture contains about fifty full-length figures.

Under Poetry we have Mount Parnassus. Apollo and the Muses are seen on the summit. On one side, near them, the epic and tragic poets Homer, Virgil, Dante. (Ariosto had not written his poem at this time, and Milton and Tasso were yet unborn.) Below, on each side, are the lyrical

poets Petrarch, Sappho, Corinna, Pindar, Horace. The arrangement, grouping, and character are most admirable and graceful; but Raphael's original design for this composition, as we have it engraved by Marc Antonio, is finer than the fresco, in which there are many alterations which cannot be considered as improvements.

Under Philosophy he has placed the School of Athens. It represents a grand hall or portico, in which a flight of steps separates the foreground from the background. Conspicuous, and above the rest, are the elder intellectual philosophers, Plato, Aristotle, Socrates; Plato characteristically pointing upwards to heaven; Aristotle pointing to the earth; Socrates impressively discoursing to the listeners near him.

Then, on a lower plan, we have the Sciences and Arts, represented by Pythagoras and Archimedes; Zoroaster, and Ptolemy the geographer; while alone, as if avoiding and avoided by all, sits Diogenes the Cynic. Raphael has represented the art of painting by the figure of his master Perugino, and has introduced a portrait of himself humbly following him. The group of Archimedes (whose head is a portrait of Bramante the architect) surrounded by his scholars, who are attentively watching him as he draws a geometrical figure, is one of the finest things which Raphael ever conceived, and the whole composition has in its regularity and

grandeur a variety and dramatic vivacity which relieve it from all formality. This picture also contains not less than fifty figures.

Law, or Jurisprudence, from the particular construction of the wall on which the subject is painted, is represented with less completeness, and is broken up into divisions. Prudence, Fortitude, and Temperance are above; below, on one side, is Pope Gregory delivering the ecclesiastical law; and on the other, Justinian promulgating his famous code of civil law. The whole decoration of this chamber forms a grand allegory of the domain of human intellect, shadowed forth in creations of surpassing beauty and dignity.

The description here given is necessarily brief and imperfect. We advise our readers to consult the engravings of these frescoes, and with the above explanation they will probably be intelligible; at all events, the wonderfully prolific genius of the painter will be appreciated, in the number of the personages introduced and the appropriate characters of each.

About this time Raphael painted that portrait of Julius II. of which a duplicate is in our National Gallery. No one who has studied the history of this extraordinary old man, and his relations with Michael Angelo and Raphael, can look upon it without interest. Another fine duplicate is in the gallery of Mr. Miles, at Leigh Court near



Pope Julius II.

Bristol. The original is in the Pitti Palace at Florence.

Also at this time Raphael painted the portrait of himself, which is preserved in the Gallery of Painters at Florence; it represents him as a very handsome young man with luxuriant hair and dark eyes, full lips, and a pensive yet benign countenance.* To this period we may also refer a number of beautiful Madonnas: Lord Garvagh's, called the Aldobrandini Madonna; the Virgin of the Bridgewater Gallery; the Vierge au Diadème in the Louvre; and the yet more famous Madonna di Foligno, now at Rome in the Vatican.

While employed for Pope Julius in executing the frescoes already described, Raphael found a munificent friend and patron in Agostino Chigi, a rich banker and merchant who was then living at Rome in great splendour. He painted several pictures for him: the four Sibyls in the chapel of the Chigi family, in the church of Santa Maria della Pace, sublime figures, full of grandeur and inspiration; and, on the wall of a chamber in his palace, that elegant fresco the Triumph of Galatea, well known from the numerous engravings.

About the year 1510 Raphael began the decoration of the second chamber of the Vatican. In

* There is an engraving by Pontius. The head, engraved by Raphael Morghen as the portrait of Raphael, is now considered to be the portrait of Bindo Altoviti. It is at Munich

this series of compositions he represented the power and glory of the Church and her miraculous deliverances from her secular enemies: all these being an indirect honour paid to, or rather claimed by, Julius II., who made it a subject of pride that he had not only expelled all enemies from the Papal territories, but also enlarged their boundaries—by no scrupulous means. On the ceiling of this room are four beautiful pictures—the promises of God to the four Patriarchs, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses. On the four side walls, the Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple at Jerusalem: the Miracle of Bolsena, by which, as it was said, heretics were silenced; Attila, King of the Huns, terrified by the apparition of St. Peter and St. Paul; and St. Peter delivered from Prison. Of these the Heliodorus is one of the grandest and most poetical of all Raphael's creations: the group of the celestial warrior trampling on the prostrate Heliodorus, with the avenging spirits rushing, floating along, air-borne, to scourge the despoiler, is wonderful for its supernatural power: it is a vision of beauty and terror.

Before this chamber was finished, Julius II. died, and was succeeded by Leo X. in 1513.

Though the character of Pope Leo X. was in all respects different from that of Julius, he was not less a patron of Raphael than his predecessor had been, and certainly the number of learned and



Group from the Heliodorus.

accomplished men whom he attracted to his court, and the enthusiasm for classical learning which prevailed among them, strongly influenced those productions of Raphael which date from the accession of Leo. They became more and more allied to the antique, and less and less embued with that pure religious spirit which we find in his earlier works.

Cardinal Bembo, Cardinal Bibiena, Count Castiglione, the poets Ariosto and Sanazzaro, ranked at this time among Raphael's intimate friends. With his celebrity his riches increased; he built himself a fine house in that part of Rome called the Borgo, between St. Peter's and the castle of St. Angelo; he had numerous scholars from all parts of Italy, who attended on him with a love and reverence and duty far beyond the lip and knee homage which waits on princes; and such was the influence of his benign and genial temper, that all these young men lived in the most entire union and friendship with him and with each other, and his school was never disturbed by those animosities and jealousies which before and since have disgraced the schools of art of Italy. All the other painters of that time were the friends rather than the rivals of the supreme and gentle Raphael, with the single exception of Michael Angelo.

About the period at which we are now arrived, the beginning of the pontificate of Leo. X., Michael Angelo had left Rome for Florence, as it has been

related in his life. Lionardo da Vinci came to Rome, by the invitation of Leo, attended by a train of scholars, and lived on good terms with Raphael, who treated the venerable old man with becoming deference. Fra Bartolomeo also visited Rome about 1513, to the great joy of his friend. We find Raphael at this time on terms of the tenderest friendship with Francia, and in correspondence with Albert Durer, for whom he entertained the highest admiration.

Under Leo X. Raphael continued his great works in the Vatican. He began the third hall or *camera* in 1515. The ceiling of this chamber had been painted by his master Perugino for Sixtus IV.; and Raphael, from a feeling of respect for his old master, would not remove or paint over his work. On the sides of the room he represented the principal events in the lives of Pope Leo III. and Pope Leo IV., shadowing forth under their names the glory of his patron Leo X. Of these pictures, the most remarkable is that which is called in Italian L'Incendio del Borgo (the Fire in the Borgo). The story says that this populous part of Rome was on fire in the time of Leo IV., and that the conflagration was extinguished by a miracle. In the hurry, confusion, and tumult of the scene; in the men escaping half naked; in the terrified groups assembled in the foreground; in the women carrying water; we find every variety



The three Angels appearing to Abram. From ‘ Raphael’s Bible.’

of attitude and emotion, expressed with a perfect knowledge of form; and some of the figures exhibit the influence of Michael Angelo's ceiling of the Sistine Chapel already described. This fresco, though so fine in point of drawing, is the worst *coloured* of the whole series; the best in point of colour are the Heliodorus and the Miracle of Bolsena.

The last of the chambers in the Vatican is the Hall of Constantine, painted with scenes from the life of that emperor. The whole of these frescoes having been executed by the scholars of Raphael, from his designs and cartoons, we shall not dwell on them here, only observing that an excellent reduced copy of the finest of all, the Battle of Constantine and Maxentius, may be seen at Hampton Court.

While Raphael, assisted by his scholars, was designing and executing the large frescoes in the Vatican, he was also engaged in many other works. His fertile mind and ready hand were never idle, and the number of *original* creations of this wonderful man, and the rapidity with which they succeeded each other, are quite unexampled. Among his most celebrated and popular compositions is the series of subjects from the Old Testament, called 'Raphael's Bible;' these were comparatively small pictures adorning the thirteen cupolas of the "Loggie" of the Vatican. These "Loggie" are

open galleries running round three sides of an open court; and the gallery on the second story is the one painted under Raphael's direction. Up the sides and round the windows are arabesque ornaments, festoons of fruit, flowers, animals, all combined and grouped together with the most exquisite and playful fancy: they have been much injured by time, yet more by the barbarous treatment of the French soldiery when Rome was sacked in 1527, and worst of all by unskilful attempts at restoration. The pictures in the cupolas, being out of reach, are better preserved. Sacred subjects were never represented in so beautiful, so poetical, and so intelligible a manner as by Raphael, but as the copies and engravings of these works are innumerable, and easily met with, we shall not enter into a particular description of them; very good copies of several may be seen at the National School of Design at Somerset House.*

There was still another great work for the Vatican intrusted to Raphael. The interior of the Sistine Chapel had been ornamented round the lower walls with paintings in imitation of tapes-

* A set of excellent engravings from the series, in a fine free style, and of a large size, and all executed at Rome after the original frescoes, is now publishing by Parker in the Strand, at the extraordinary low price of six engravings for nine shillings. The subjects, the size, and the fine taste of the execution, render them admirable ornaments for the walls of a school-room or study.



Group of Joseph relating his Dream. From ' Raphael's Bible.'

tries. Leo X. resolved to substitute real draperies of the most costly material; and Raphael was to furnish the subjects and drawings, which were to be copied in the looms of Flanders, and worked in a mixture of wool, silk, and gold. Thus originated the famous CARTOONS OF RAPHAEL.

They were originally eleven in number, to fit the ten compartments into which the wall was divided by as many pilasters, and the space over the altar. Eight were large, one larger than the rest, and two small. Of the eleven cartoons designed by Raphael, four are lost, and seven remain, which are now in the Royal Gallery at Hampton Court. As they rank among the greatest productions of art, and have been for some time freely thrown open to the public, we shall give a detailed account of them here from various sources,* and add some remarks which may enable the uninitiated to form a judgment of their characteristic merits, as well as to appreciate duly the privilege which in a wise, as well as a right royal and gracious spirit, has lately been conceded to the people.

The intention in the whole series of subjects

* See Passavant's 'Rafael;' Kugler's 'Handbuch;' Bunsen's 'Stadt Rom;' Murray's 'Handbook to the Public Galleries of Art;' and a very clever account of the Cartoons which appeared in the 'Penny Magazine' some years ago. From all these works extracts have been freely taken, and put together so as to form a correct and complete description both of the Cartoons and the Tapestries.

was to express the mission, the sufferings, and the triumph of the Christian church. The Death of the First Martyr, and the acts of the two great Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, were ranged along the sides to the right and left of the high altar; while over the altar was the Coronation of the Virgin, a subject which, as we have already seen, was always symbolical of the triumph of religion. In the original arrangement the tapestries hung in the following order:*—

On the left of the altar—1. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes (*i. e.* the Calling of Peter); 2. The Charge to Peter; 3. The Stoning of Stephen; 4. The Healing of the Lame Man; 5. The Death of Ananias.

On the right of the altar—1. The Conversion of St. Paul; 2. Elymas struck Blind; 3. Paul and Barnabas at Lystra; 4. Paul preaching at Athens; 5. Paul in Prison. All along underneath ran a rich border in chiaro'scuro, of a bronze colour, relieved with gold, representing on a smaller scale incidents in the life of Leo X., with ornamental arabesques, groups of sporting genii, fruits, flowers, &c.; and the pilasters between the tapestries were also adorned with rich arabesques. Old engravings

* Subsequently, when the whole of the wall was painted by Michael Angelo with the Last Judgment, this order was changed, and the tapestry of the Crowning of the Virgin entirely removed.



The Death of Ananias.

exist of some of these designs, which are among the most beautiful things in Italian art; as full of grandeur and grace as they are exquisitely fanciful and luxuriant.

The large cartoons of this series which are lost are, the Stoning of Stephen; the Conversion of St. Paul; Paul in his Dungeon at Philippi; and the Crowning of the Virgin.

The seven which remain to us are arranged at Hampton Court without any regard either to their original arrangement or to chronological order. Beginning at the door by which we enter, they succeed each other thus:—

1. THE DEATH OF ANANIAS.

"Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."—*Acts* v.

Nine of the Apostles stand together on a raised platform; St. Peter in the midst, with uplifted hands, is in the act of speaking; on the right Ananias lies prostrate on the earth, while a young man and woman, on the left, are starting back, with ghastly horror and wonder in every feature; in the background, to the left, is seen Sapphira, who, unaware of the catastrophe of her husband and the terrible fate impending over her, is paying some money with one hand, while she withholds some in the other; St. John and another Apostle are on the left, distributing alms. The figures are altogether twenty-four in number. Size, seventeen feet six inches by eleven feet four inches.

As a composition, considered artistically, this cartoon holds the first place; nothing has ever exceeded it: only Raphael himself, in some of his other works, has equalled it in the wondrous adaptation of the means employed to the end in view. By the circular arrangement of the composition, and by elevating the figures behind above those in front, the whole of the personages on the scene are brought at once to sight. The elevated position of Peter and James, though standing back from the foreground, and their dignified figures, contrast strongly with the abject form of Ananias, struck down by the hand of God, helpless, and, as it seems, quivering in every limb. Those of the spectators who are near Ananias express their horror and astonishment by the most various and appropriate expression.

"He falls," says Hazlitt, "so naturally, that it seems as if a person could fall no other way; and yet, of all the ways in which a human figure could fall, it is probably the most expressive of a person overwhelmed by, and in the grasp of, Divine vengeance. This is in some measure the secret of Raphael's success. Most painters, in studying an attitude, puzzle themselves to find out what will be picturesque, and what will be fine, and never discover it. Raphael only thought how a person would stand or fall under such or such circumstances, and the picturesque and the fine followed as a matter of course. Hence the unaffected force

and dignity of his style, which are only another name for truth and nature under impressive and momentous circumstances."

We have here an instance of that truly Shaksperian art by which Raphael always softens and heightens the effect of tragic terror. St. John, at the very instant when this awful judgment has fallen on the hypocrite and unbeliever, has benignly turned to bestow alms and a blessing on the poor good man before him.*

2. ELYMAS THE SORCERER STRUCK WITH BLINDNESS.

"And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand."

Acts xiii. 11.

The Proconsul Sergius, seated on his throne, beholds with astonishment Elymas struck blind by the word of the Apostle Paul, who stands on the

* "It has been questioned whether the woman who is advancing from behind was meant for Sapphira, as it is stated in the sacred record that three hours had elapsed after the death of Ananias before she entered the place. Notwithstanding this objection, it is most probable that Raphael intended this figure for the wife of Ananias; and the slight inaccuracy is more than atoned for by the sublime moral, which shows the woman approaching the spot where her husband had met his doom, and where her own death awaits her, but wholly unconscious of those judgments, and absorbed in counting that gold by which both she and her partner had been betrayed to their fate."

left; an attendant is gazing with wonder in his face, while eight persons behind him are all occupied with the miraculous event which is passing before their eyes; two lictors are on the left; in all fourteen figures. Size, fourteen feet seven inches by eleven feet four inches.

This cartoon, as a composition, is particularly remarkable for the concentration of the effect and interest in the one action. The figure of St. Paul is magnificent; while the crouching abject form of Elymas, groping his way, and blind even to his finger-ends, stands in the midst, and on him all eyes are bent.* The manner in which the impression is graduated from terror down to indifferent curiosity, while one person explains the event to another by means of gesture, are among the most spirited dramatic effects Raphael ever produced.

3. THE HEALING OF THE LAME MAN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE OF THE TEMPLE.

"Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none: but such as I have I give unto thee. And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up."—*Acts* iii. 6, 7.

Under the portico of the Temple of Jerusalem stand the two Apostles Peter and John; the former

* A story is told of Garrick objecting to the truth of this action in the hearing of Benjamin West, who, in vindication of the painter, desired Garrick to shut his eyes and walk across the room, when he instantly stretched out his hand, and began to feel his way with the exact attitude and expression here represented.



The Healing of the Lame Man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple.

is holding by the hand a miserable deformed cripple, who gazes up in his face with joyful, eager wonder; another cripple is seen on the left. Among the people are seen conspicuous a woman with an infant in her arms, and another leading two naked boys, one of whom is carrying two doves as an offering. The wreathed and richly adorned columns are imitated from those which have been preserved for ages in the church of St. Peter as relics of the Temple of Jerusalem. With regard to the composition, Raphael has been criticised for breaking it up into parts by the introduction of the pillars; yet, if properly considered, this very management is a proof of the exquisite taste of the painter, and his attention to the object he had in view. Adhering to the sense of the passage in Scripture, he could not make all the figures refer to one principal action, the healing of the cripple; he has therefore framed it in a manner between the two columns; and by the groups introduced into the other two divisions he has intimated that the people were entering the temple "at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour." It is evident, moreover, that had the shafts been perfectly straight, according to the severest law of good taste in architecture, the effect would have been extremely disagreeable to the eye; by their winding form they harmonise with the manifold forms of the moving figures around, and they illustrate,

by their elaborate elegance, the Scripture phrase, "the gate which is called Beautiful." The misery, the distortion, the ugliness of the cripple, are made as striking as possible, and contrasted with the noble head and form of St. Peter and the benign features of St. John. The figure of the young woman with her child is a model of feminine sweetness and grace; it is eminently, perfectly Raphaelesque, stamped with his peculiar sentiment and refinement. The bright open sky seen between the interstices of the columns harmonises with the lightness, cheerfulness, and happy expression of these figures. In the compartment where the miracle is taking place there is the same correspondence of effect with sentiment; the subdued light of the lamps burning in the depth of the recess accords well with the reverential feeling excited by the sacred transaction. Many parts of this cartoon have unfortunately been injured, and much of the harmony destroyed, yet it remains one of the most wonderful relics of art now extant.

4. THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

"When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." *Luke* v. 8.

On the left Christ is seated in a bark, in the act of speaking to St. Peter, who has fallen on his knees before him; behind him is a youth, and a

second bark is on the right. Two men are busied drawing up the nets miraculously laden, while a third steers. On the shore, in the foreground, stand three cranes; and in the distance are seen the people to whom Christ had been preaching out of the ship or boat. In this cartoon the composition is very beautiful; and the execution, from its mingled delicacy, power, and precision, is supposed to be almost entirely from Raphael's own hand. The effect is wonderfully bright. In the broad clear daylight, and against the sky, the figures stand out in strong relief. The clear lake ripples round the bark, and the figure of the Saviour, in the pale blue vest and white mantle, appears all light, and radiant with beneficence. The awe, humility, and love in the attitude and countenance of St. Peter are wonderfully expressive. The masterly drawing in the figures of the apostles in the second boat conveys most strongly the impression of the weight they are attempting to raise. In the fish and the cranes, all painted with exquisite and minute fidelity to nature, we trace the hand of Giovanni da Udine. These strange black birds have here a grand effect. "There is a certain sea-wildness about them, and as their food was fish, they contribute mightily to express the affair in hand; they are a fine part of the scene. They serve also to prevent the heaviness which that part would otherwise have had, by breaking the parallel lines which

would have been made by the boats and base of the picture."*

* "A painter is allowed sometimes to depart even from natural and historical truth. Thus, in the cartoon of the Draught of Fishes, Raphael has made a boat too little to hold the figures he has placed in it; and this is so visible, that some are apt to triumph over that great man as having nodded on that occasion, while others have pretended to excuse it by saying it was done to make the miracle appear greater; but the truth is, had he made the boat large enough for those figures, his picture would have been all boat, which would have had a disagreeable effect; and to have made his figures small enough for a vessel of that size, would have rendered them unsuitable to the rest of the set, and have made those figures appear less considerable. It is amiss as it is, but would have been worse any other way, as it frequently happens in other cases. Raphael, therefore, wisely chose this lesser inconvenience, this seeming error, which he knew the judicious would know was none, and for the rest he was above being solicitous for his reputation with them. So that, upon the whole, this is so far from being a fault, that it is an instance of the consummate judgment of that most incomparable man, which he learned in his great school, the antique, where this liberty is commonly taken in an eminent manner in the Trajan and Antoninian columns, and on many other occasions, in the finest bas-reliefs. And to note it, by the by, it seems to be a strange rashness and self-sufficiency in a spectator or a reader when he thinks he sees an absurdity in a great author, to take it immediately for granted it is such. Surely it is a most reasonable and just prejudice in favour of a man we have always known to act with wisdom and propriety on every occasion, to suspend at least our criticism, and cast off illiberal triumph over him, and to suppose it at least possible that he might have had reasons that we are not aware of."—Richardson, p. 27.



Paul and Barnabas at Lystra.

5. Paul and Barnabas at Lystra.

"Then the priest of Jupiter which was before their city brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people, which when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of, they rent their clothes."

Acts xiv. 13, 14.

On the left Paul and Barnabas are standing beneath a portico, and appear to recoil from the intention of the townsmen to offer sacrifice to them; the first is rending his garment and rebuking a man who is bringing a ram to be offered. On the right, near the centre, is seen a group of the people bringing forward two oxen; a man is raising an axe to strike one of them down; his arm is held back by a youth who, having observed the abhorrent gesture of Paul, judges that the sacrifice will be offensive to him. In the foreground appears the cripple, no longer so, who is clasping his hands with an expression of gratitude; his crutches lie useless at his feet: an old man, raising part of his dress, gazes with a look of astonishment on the restored limbs. In the background, the forum of Lystra, with several temples. Towards the centre is seen a statue of Mercury, in allusion to the words in the text: "And they called Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker."

As a composition this cartoon is an instance of the consummate skill with which Raphael has contrived to bring together a variety of circumstances

so combined as to make the story perfectly intelligible as a passing scene, linking it at the same time with the past and the succeeding time. We have the foregone moment in the appearance of the healed cripple, and the wonder he excites; in the furious looks directed against the apostles by some of the spectators we see foreshadowed the persecution which immediately followed this act of mistaken adoration. Every part of the grouping, the figures, the head, both in drawing and expression, are wonderful, and have an infusion of the antique and classical spirit most proper to the subject. The sacrificial group of the ox, with the figure holding its head and the man lifting the axe, was taken from a Roman bas-relief which in Raphael's time was in the Villa Medici, and the idea varied and adapted to his purpose with infinite skill. The boys piping at the altar are full of beauty, and most gracefully contrasted in character. The whole is full of movement and interest.

6. St. Paul Preaching at Athens.

"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God."—*Acts* xvii. 22, 23.

Paul, standing on some elevated steps, is preaching to the Athenians in the Areopagus; behind

him are three philosophers of the different sects, the Cynic, the Epicurean, and the Platonic; beyond, a group of sophists disputing among each other. On the right are seen the half-figures of Dionysius the Areopagite and the woman Damaris, of whom it is expressly said that they "believed and clave unto him." On the same side, in the background, is seen the statue of Mars, in front of a circular temple. In point of pictorial composition this cartoon is one of the finest in the series. St. Paul, elevated above his auditors, grandly dignified in bearing, as one divinely inspired, lofty in stature and position, "stands like a tower." This figure of St. Paul has been imitated from the fresco of Masaccio in the Carmine at Florence. There Paul is represented as visiting St. Peter in prison. One arm only is raised, the forefinger pointing upward; he is speaking words of consolation to him through the grated bars of his dungeon, behind which appears the form of St. Peter. Raphael has taken the idea of the figure, raised the two arms, and given the whole an air of inspired energy wanting in the original. The persons who surround him are not to be considered a mere promiscuous assemblage of individuals; among them several figures may each be said to personify a class, and the different sects of Grecian philosophy may be easily distinguished. Here the Cynic, revolving deeply, and fabricating

objections; there the Stoic, leaning on his staff, giving a steady but scornful attention, and fixed in obstinate incredulity; there the disciples of Plato, not conceding a full belief, but pleased at least with the beauty of the doctrine, and listening with gratified attention. Farther on is a promiscuous group of disputants, sophists, and freethinkers, engaged in vehement discussion, but apparently more bent on exhibiting their own ingenuity than anxious to elicit truth or acknowledge conviction. At a considerable distance in the background are seen two doctors of the Jewish law. The varied groups, the fine thinking heads among the auditors, the expression of curiosity, reflection, doubt, conviction, faith, as revealed in the different countenances and attitudes, are all as fine as possible; particularly the man who has wrapped his robe around him, and appears buried in thought. "This figure also is borrowed from Masaccio. The closed eyes, which in Masaccio might be easily mistaken for sleeping, are not in the least ambiguous in the cartoon; his eyes indeed are closed, but they are closed with such vehemence that the agitation of a mind perplexed in the extreme is seen at the first glance. But what is most extraordinary, and I think particularly to be admired, is that the same idea is continued through the whole figure, even to the drapery, which is so closely muffled about him that even his hands are



The Charge to St. Peter.

not seen; by this happy correspondence between the expression of the countenance and the disposition of the parts, the figure appears to think from head to foot." *

7. THE CHARGE TO ST. PETER.

"Feed my sheep."—*Acts* xxi. 16.

Christ is standing and pointing with the right hand to a flock of sheep; his left hand is extended towards Peter, who, holding the key, kneels at his feet. The other ten apostles stand behind him, listening with various gestures and expression to the words of the Saviour. In the background a landscape, and on the right the Lake of Gennesareth and a fisher's bark. In the tapestry the white robe of our Saviour is strewed with golden stars, which has a beautiful effect, and doubtless existed in the cartoon, though no trace of this is now visible.

As the transaction here represented took place between Christ and St. Peter only, there was little room for dramatic effect. Richardson praises the introduction of the sheep, as the only means of making the incident intelligible; but I agree with Dr. Waagen that herein Raphael has perhaps, in avoiding one error, fallen into another, and, not able to give us the real meaning of the words, has turned into a palpable object what was merely a figurative expression, and thus produced an

* Sir Joshua Reynolds.

ambiguity of another and of a more unpleasant kind.

The figure of Christ is wonderfully noble in conception and treatment; the heads of the apostles finely diversified; in some we see only affectionate acquiescence, duteous submission; in others wonder, displeasure, and jealous discontent. The figures of the apostles are in the cartoon happily relieved from each other by variety of local tint, which cannot be given in a print, and hence the heavy effect of the composition when studied through the engraving only.

These are the subjects of the famous Cartoons of Raphael. To describe the effect of the light and sketchy treatment, so easy, and yet so large and grand in style, we shall borrow the words of an eloquent writer.

"Compared with these," says Hazlitt, as finely as truly, "all other pictures look like oil and varnish; we are stopped and attracted by the colouring, the pencilling, the finishing, the instrumentalities of art; but *here* the painter seems to have flung his mind upon the canvas. His thoughts, his great ideas alone, prevail; there is nothing between us and the subject; we look through a frame and see Scripture histories, and are made actual spectators in miraculous events. Not to speak it profanely, they are a sort of a revelation

of the subjects of which they treat; there is an ease and freedom of manner about them which brings preternatural characters and situations home to us with the familiarity of every-day occurrences; and while the figures fill, raise, and satisfy the mind, they seem to have cost the painter nothing. Everywhere else we see the means, here we arrive at the end apparently without any means. There is a spirit at work in the divine creation before us; we are unconscious of any steps taken, of any progress made; we are aware only of comprehensive results—of whole masses of figures: the sense of power supersedes the appearance of effort. It is as if we had ourselves seen these persons and things at some former state of our being, and that the drawing certain lines upon coarse paper by some unknown spell brought back the entire and living images, and made them pass before us, palpable to thought, feeling, sight. Perhaps not all this is owing to genius; something of this effect may be ascribed to the simplicity of the vehicle employed in embodying the story, and something to the decaying and dilapidated state of the pictures themselves. They are the more majestic for being in ruins. We are struck chiefly with the truth of proportion, and the range of conception — all made spiritual. The corruptible has put on incorruption; and, amidst the wreck of colour and the mouldering of material beauty, nothing is left but

a universe of thought, or the broad imminent shadows of "calm contemplation and majestic pains."

There exist two sets of copies of the same size as the originals: one executed by Sir James Thornhill, and presented by the Duke of Bedford to the Royal Academy; and another set presented by the Duke of Marlborough to the University of Oxford.

It is matter of regret, but hardly of surprise, that the cartoons have never yet been adequately engraved. The first complete series which appeared was by Simon Gribelin, a French engraver, who came over in 1680, and was published in the reign of Queen Anne. The prints are small neat memoranda of the compositions, nothing more.

The second set was executed by Sir Nicholas Dorigny, who undertook the work under the patronage of the government, and presented to the king, George I., in 1719, two sets of the finished engravings, on which occasion the king bestowed on him a purse of one hundred guineas, and, at the request of the Duke of Devonshire, knighted him. These engravings are large, and tolerably but coarsely executed, and are preferred by connoisseurs; but on the whole they are poor as works of art.

There are two small sets in mezzotinto, and another small set by Filtler.

The set of large engravings by Thomas Holloway was begun by him in 1800, and was not quite completed at his death in 1826. These engravings have been praised for the "finished and elaborate style in which they have been executed," and they deserve this praise; but, as transcripts of the cartoons, they are altogether false in point of style. They are too metallic, too mechanical, too laboured: a set of masterly etchings would better convey an impression of the slight free execution, the spiritual ease of the originals. These engravings give one the idea of being done from highly finished, deeply coloured oil-pictures.

Since 1837 a large set has been commenced by John Burnett, in a mixed, rather coarse style, but effective and spirited; they are sold at a cheap rate.

Lastly, a set has been commenced by Mr. L. Grüner, whose exquisite taste and classical style of engraving, as well as his profound acquaintance with the works and genius of Raphael, render him particularly fit for the task.

Raphael finished these cartoons in 1516. They are all from fourteen to eighteen feet in length, and about twelve feet high; the figures above life size, drawn with chalk upon strong paper, and coloured in distemper. He received for his designs four hundred and thirty-four gold ducats (about 650*l.*), which were paid to him, three hundred on

the 15th of June, 1515, and one hundred and thirty-four in December, 1516. The rich tapestries worked from these cartoons, in wool, silk, and gold, were completed at Arras, and sent to Rome, in 1519. For these the Pope paid to the manufacturer at Arras fifty thousand gold ducats; they were exhibited for the first time on St. Stephen's Day, December 26, 1519. Raphael had the satisfaction, before he died, of seeing them hung in their places, and of witnessing the wonder and applause they excited through the whole city. Their subsequent fate was very curious and eventful. In the sack of Rome, in 1527, they were carried away by the French soldiery; but were restored, in 1553, during the reign of Pope Julius III. by the Duc de Montmorenci, all but the piece which represented the Coronation of the Virgin, which is supposed to have been burned for the sake of the gold thread. Again, in 1798, they made part of the French spoliations, and were actually sold to a Jew at Leghorn, who burnt one of them for the purpose of extracting the precious metal contained in the threads. As it was found, however, to furnish very little, the proprietor judged it better to allow the others to retain their original shape, and they were soon afterwards re-purchased from him by the agents of Pius VII., and reinstated in the galleries of the Vatican. Several sets of tapestries were worked from the cartoons: one was sent as

a present to Henry VIII., and after the death of Charles I. sold into Spain; another or the same set was exhibited in London about a year ago, and has since been sold to the King of Prussia.

While all Rome was indulging in ecstasies over the rich and dearly paid tapestries, which were not *then*, and are still less *now*, worth one of the cartoons, these precious productions of the artist's own mind were lying in the warehouse of the weaver at Arras, neglected and forgotten. Some were torn into fragments, and parts of them exist in various collections. Seven still remained in some garret or cellar, when Rubens, just a century afterwards, mentioned their existence to Charles I., and advised him to purchase them for the use of a tapestry manufactory which King James I. had established at Mortlake. The purchase was made. They had been cut into long slips about two feet wide, for the convenience of the workmen, and in this state they arrived in England.* On Charles's death, Cromwell bought them at the sale of the royal

* There can be no doubt of the purpose for which Charles I. acquired them. The entry in the king's catalogue runs thus:—"In a slit wooden case some two cartoons of Raphael Urbino's, *for hangings to be made by;* and the other five are, by the king's appointment, delivered to Mr. Francis Cleyne, at Mortlake, *to make hangings by.*" It appears that Cromwell had some intention of continuing the manufactory of tapestry at Mortlake as a national undertaking, and retained the cartoons for purposes connected with it.

effects for 300*l.* We had very nearly lost them again in the reign of Charles II., for Louis XIV. having intimated through his ambassador, Barillon, a wish to possess them at any price, the needy, careless Charles was on the point of yielding them, and would have done so but for the representations of the Lord Treasurer Danby, to whom, in fact, we owe it that they were not ceded to France. They remained, however, neglected in one of the lumber-rooms at Whitehall till the reign of William III., and narrowly escaped being destroyed by fire when Whitehall was burned in 1698. It must have been shortly after that King William ordered them to be repaired, the fragments pasted together and stretched upon linen; and being just at that time occupied with the alterations and improvements at Hampton Court, Sir Christopher Wren had his commands to plan and erect a room expressly to receive them,—the room in which they now hang.

In the Vatican there is a second set of ten tapestries, for which Raphael gave the original designs, but he did not execute the cartoons, and the style of drawing in those fragments which remain is not his. A very fine fragment of one of these cartoons, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, is in our National Gallery. It is very different in the style of execution from the cartoons at Hampton Court, and has been painted over in oil, when or by whom

is not known, but certainly before 1730. The subjects of the second set were all from the life of Christ, and were as follows:

1. The Slaughter of the Innocents.
2. The Adoration of the Shepherds.
3. The Adoration of the Magi.
4. The Presentation in the Temple.
5. The Resurrection.
6. The Noli me Tangere.
7. The Descent into Purgatory.
8. Christ and the Disciples at Emmaus.
9. The Ascension.
10. The Descent of the Holy Ghost.

The tapestries of these subjects still hang in the Vatican, and all have been engraved.

The fame of Raphael had by this time spread to other countries. Horace Walpole, in the 'Anecdotes of Painting,' assures us that Henry VIII., who on coming to the throne was desirous of emulating Francis I. as a patron of art, invited Raphael to his court; but he does not say on what authority he states this as a fact. At all events, the young king was obliged to content himself with the little St. George sent to him by the Duke of Urbino, as a specimen of Raphael's talent; and with Holbein, whom he soon after engaged in his service, as his court painter,—perhaps the best substitute for Raphael in point of original genius then to be obtained by offers of gold or patronage. Francis I.

was also most anxious to attract Raphael to his court, and not succeeding, he desired to have a picture by his hand, leaving him the choice of subject. As Raphael had chosen St. George as the fittest subject for the King of England, he now, with equal propriety and taste, chose St. Michael, the patron saint of the most celebrated military order in France, as likely to be the most acceptable subject for the French king, and represented the archangel as victorious over the Spirit of Evil. The figures are as large as life. St. Michael, beaming with angelic beauty and power, stands with one foot on the Evil One, and raises his lance to thrust him down to the deep. Satan is so represented that very little of his hideous and prostrate form is visible, the grand victorious spirit filling the whole canvas and the eye of the spectator. The king expressed his satisfaction in a right royal and graceful fashion, and rewarded the artist munificently. Raphael, considering himself overpaid, and not to be outdone in generosity, sent to the king his famous Holy Family (called The large Holy Family, because the figures are life-size), in which the infant Christ is seen in act to spring from the cradle into his mother's arms, while angels scatter flowers from above. Engravings and copies without number exist of this famous picture: the original is in the gallery of the Louvre. Raphael sent also his St. Margaret over-



St. Michael overcoming the Dragon.

coming the Dragon, a compliment apparently to the king's favourite sister, Margaret, queen of Navarre: this also is in the Louvre. When they were placed before Francis I., he ordered his treasurer to count out twenty-four thousand livres (about 3000*l.* according to the present value of money), and sent it to the painter with the strongest expressions of his approbation. At a later period he purchased the beautiful portrait of Joanna of Arragon, vice-queen of Naples, which is also in the Louvre.

About the same period (that is, between 1517 and 1520) Raphael painted for the convent of St. Sixtus at Piacenza one of the grandest and most celebrated of all his works, called, from its original destination, the Madonna di San Sisto. It represents the Virgin standing in a majestic attitude; the infant Saviour *enthroned* in her arms; and around her head a glory of innumerable cherubs melting into light. Kneeling before her we see on one side St. Sixtus, on the other St. Barbara, and beneath her feet two heavenly cherubs gaze up in adoration. In execution, as in design, this is probably the most perfect picture in the world. It is painted throughout by Raphael's own hand; and as no sketch or study of any part of it was ever known to exist, and as the execution must have been, from the thinness and delicacy of the colours, wonderfully rapid, it is supposed that he painted it at once on the canvas—a *creation* rather than a

picture. In the beginning of the last century the Elector of Saxony, Augustus III., purchased this picture from the monks of the convent for the sum of sixty thousand florins (about 6000*l.*), and it now forms the chief boast and ornament of the Dresden Gallery. The finest engraving is that of Frederic Müller, good impressions of which are worth twenty or thirty guineas; but there is also a very beautiful and faithful lithograph by Hofstängel, which may be purchased for half as many shillings.

For his patron Agostino Chigi Raphael painted in fresco the history of Cupid and Psyche. The palace which belonged to the Chigi family is now the Villa Farnesina, on the walls of which these famous frescoes may still be seen in very good preservation. In Grüner's admirable work on the 'Decoration of the Palaces and Churches in Italy' there is a perspective view of the corridor of the Farnesina, showing how this beautiful series of compositions is arranged on the ceiling and walls. In the same palace he painted the Triumph of Galatea: in this fresco he was greatly assisted by Giulio Romano.

During the last ten years of his life the fame of Raphael was very much extended by means of the engraver Marc Antonio Raimondi, who, after studying design in the school of Francia at Bologna, betook himself to Rome, and gained the admiration and goodwill of Raphael by the perfect engravings



Charity, after Raphael.

he made from some of his beautiful works. Marc Antonio lived for some time in Raphael's own house, and engraved for him and under his direction most of those precious and exquisite compositions, the most wonderful creations of the mind of Raphael, of which there exist no finished pictures, and in some cases no drawings nor memoranda. Among these may be mentioned a few which are to be found in the Print-room of the British Museum :—1. The Lucretia, a single figure, wonderfully beautiful. 2. The Massacre of the Innocents. 3. Eve presenting to Adam the forbidden fruit. 4. The Last Supper. 5. The Mater Dolorosa, the Virgin lamenting over the dead body of our Saviour. 6. Another of the same subject, containing several figures. These are only a few of the most precious, for within the present limits it is impossible to go into detail. Some time after the death of Raphael, Marc Antonio was very deservedly banished from Rome by Clement VII. Tempted by gold, he had lent his unrivalled skill to shameful purposes. According to Malvasia, he was afterwards assassinated at Bologna.

The last great picture which Raphael undertook, and which at the time of his death was not quite completed, was the Transfiguration of our Saviour on Mount Tabor. This picture is divided into two parts. The lower part contains a crowd of figures, and is full of passion, energy, action. In the centre

is the demoniac boy, convulsed and struggling in the arms of his father. Two women, kneeling, implore assistance; others are seen crying aloud and stretching out their arms for aid. In the disciples of Jesus we see exhibited, in various shades of expression, astonishment, horror, sympathy, profound thought. One among them, with a benign and youthful countenance, looks compassionately on the father, plainly intimating that he can give no help. The upper part of the picture represents Mount Tabor: the three apostles lie prostrate, dazzled, on the earth; above them, transfigured in glory, floats the divine form of the Saviour, with Moses and Elias on either side. "The twofold action contained in this picture, to which shallow critics have taken exception, is explained historically and satisfactorily merely by the fact that the incident of the possessed boy occurred in the absence of Christ; but it explains itself in a still higher sense, when we consider the deeper universal meaning of the picture. For this purpose it is not even necessary to consult the books of the New Testament for the explanation of the particular incidents: the lower portion represents the calamities and miseries of human life, the rule of demoniac power, the weakness even of the faithful when unassisted, and directs them to look on high for aid and strength in adversity. Above, in the brightness of divine bliss, undisturbed by the suffer-

ings of the lower world, we behold the source of our consolation and of our redemption from evil."

At this time the lovers of painting at Rome were divided in opinion as to the relative merits of Michael Angelo and Raphael, and formed two great parties, that of Raphael being by far the most numerous.

Michael Angelo, with characteristic haughtiness, disdained any open rivalry with Raphael, and put forward the Venetian, Sebastian del Piombo, as no unworthy competitor of the great Roman painter. Raphael bowed before Michael Angelo, and, with the modesty and candour which belonged to his character, was heard to thank Heaven that he had been born in the same age and enabled to profit by the grand creations of that sublime genius: but he was by no means inclined to yield any supremacy to Sebastian; he knew his own strength too well. To decide the controversy, the Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, afterwards Pope Clement VII., commissioned Raphael to paint this picture of the Transfiguration, and at the same time commanded from Sebastian del Piombo the Raising of Lazarus, which is now in our National Gallery (No. 1): both pictures were intended by the cardinal for his cathedral at Narbonne, he having lately been created Archbishop of Narbonne by Francis I. Michael Angelo, well aware that Sebastian was a far better colourist than designer, furnished him

with the cartoon for his picture, and, it is said, drew some of the figures (that of Lazarus, for example) with his own hand on the panel; but he was so far from doing this secretly, that Raphael heard of it, and exclaimed joyfully, "Michael Angelo has graciously favoured me, in that he has deemed me worthy to compete with himself, and not with Sebastian!" But he did not live to enjoy the triumph of his acknowledged superiority, dying before he had finished his picture, which was afterwards completed by the hand of Giulio Romano.

During the last years of his life, and while engaged in painting the Transfiguration, Raphael's active mind was employed on many other things. He had been appointed by the pope to superintend the building of St. Peter's, and he prepared the architectural plans for that vast undertaking. He was most active and zealous in carrying out the pope's project for disinterring and preserving the remains of art which lay buried beneath the ruins of ancient Rome. A letter is yet extant addressed by Raphael to Pope Leo X., in which he lays down a systematic, well-considered plan for excavating by degrees the whole of the ancient city; and a writer of that time has left a Latin epigram to this purpose—that Raphael had sought and found in Rome "*another Rome*:" "To seek it," adds the poet, "was worthy of a great man; to reveal it, worthy of a god." He also made several drawings and

models for sculpture, particularly for a statue of Jonah, now in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo. Nor was this all. With a princely magnificence he had sent artists at his own cost to various parts of Italy and into Greece, to make drawings from those remains of antiquity which his numerous and important avocations prevented him from visiting himself. He was in close intimacy and correspondence with most of the celebrated men of his time; interested himself in all that was going forward; mingled in society, lived in splendour, and was always ready to assist generously his own family, and the pupils who had gathered round him. The Cardinal Bibbiena offered him his niece in marriage, with a dowry of three thousand gold crowns; but the early death of Maria di Bibbiena prevented this union, for which it appears that Raphael himself had no great inclination. In possession of all that ambition could desire, for him the cup of life was still running over with love, hope, power, glory—when, in the very prime of manhood, and in the midst of vast undertakings, he was seized with a violent fever, caught, it is said, in superintending some subterranean excavations, and expired after an illness of fourteen days. His death took place on Good Friday (his birth-day), April 6, 1520, having completed his thirty-seventh year. Great was the grief of all classes; unspeakable that of his friends and scholars. The pope had sent every day

to inquire after his health, adding the most kind and cheering messages; and when told that the beloved and admired painter was no more, he broke out into lamentations on his own and the world's loss. The body was laid on a bed of state, and above it was suspended the last work of that divine hand, the glorious Transfiguration. From his own house near St. Peter's a multitude of all ranks followed the bier in sad procession, and his remains were laid in the church of the Pantheon, near those of his betrothed bride, Maria de Bibbiena, in a spot chosen by himself during his lifetime.

Several years ago (in the year 1833) there arose among the antiquarians of Rome a keen dispute concerning a human skull, which, on no evidence whatever, except a long-received tradition, had been preserved and exhibited in the Academy of St. Luke as the skull of Raphael. Some even expressed a doubt as to the exact place of his sepulchre, though upon this point the contemporary testimony seemed to leave no room for uncertainty. To ascertain the fact, permission was obtained from the papal government, and from the canons of the church of the Rotunda (*i. e.* of the Pantheon), to make some researches; and on the 14th of September, in the same year, after five days spent in removing the pavement in several places, the remains of Raphael were discovered in a vault behind the high altar, and certified as his by indisputable proofs. After

being examined, and a cast made from the skull and from the right hand, the skeleton was exhibited publicly in a glass case, and multitudes thronged to the church to look upon it. On the 18th of October, 1833, a second funeral ceremony took place. The remains were deposited in a pine-wood coffin, then in a marble sarcophagus, presented by the pope (Gregory XVI.), and reverently consigned to their former resting-place, in presence of more than three thousand spectators, including almost all the artists, the officers of government, and other persons of the highest rank in Rome.

Besides his grand compositions from the Old and New Testament and his frescoes and arabesques in the Vatican, Raphael has left about one hundred and twenty pictures of the Virgin and Child, all various—only resembling each other in the peculiar type of chaste and maternal loveliness which he has given to the Virgin, and the infantine beauty of the Child. The most celebrated of his Madonnas, in the order in which they were painted, are:—1. The Madonna di Foligno, in the Vatican. 2. The Madonna of the Fish, at Madrid. 3. The Madonna del Cardellino, at Florence. 4. The Madonna di San Sisto, at Dresden. 5. The Madonna called the Pearl, at Madrid. Eight of his Madonna pictures are in England, in private galleries.

There are but few pictures taken from mythology and profane history, the Cupid and Psyche

and the Galatea being the most important; but a vast number of drawings and compositions, some of them of consummate beauty.

He painted about eighty portraits, of which the most famous are Julius II.; Leo X. (the originals of both these are at Florence): Cardinal Bibbiena; Cardinal Bembo; and Count Castiglione (the last at Paris): the Youth with his Violin, at Rome; Bindo Altoviti, supposed for a long time to be his own portrait, now at Munich; the beautiful Joanna of Arragon, in the Louvre. The portrait called the Fornarina had long been supposed to represent a young girl to whom Raphael had attached himself soon after his arrival in Rome; but this appears very doubtful; Passavant supposes it to represent Beatrice Pio, a celebrated improvisatrice of that time. Besides these we have seventeen architectural designs for buildings, public and private, and several designs for sculpture, ornaments, &c. But it is not any single production of his hand, however rarely beautiful, nor his superiority in any particular department of art; it is the number and the variety of his creations, the union of inexhaustible fertility of imagination with excellence of every kind—faculties never combined in the same degree in any artist before or since—which have placed Raphael at the head of his profession, and have rendered him the wonder and delight of all ages.

We shall now proceed to give an account of some of Raphael's most famous scholars.



Giulio Romano.

THE SCHOLARS OF RAPHAEL.

We have already had occasion to observe the great number of scholars, some of them older than himself, who had assembled round Raphael, and the unusual harmony in which they lived together: Vasari relates that, when he went to court, a train of fifty painters attended on him from his own house to the Vatican. They came from every part of Italy; from Florence, Milan, Venice, Bologna, Ferrara, Naples, and even from beyond the Alps, to study under the great Roman master. Many of them assisted, with more or less skill, in the execution of his great works in fresco; some imitated him in one thing, some in another; but the unrivalled charm of Raphael's productions lies in the impress of the mind which produced them: this he could not impart to others. Those who followed servilely a particular manner of conception and drawing, which they called "Raphael's style," degenerated into insipidity and littleness. Those who had original power deviated into exaggerations and perversities. Not one among them approached *him*. Some caught a faint reflection of his grace, some of his power; but they turned it to other purposes;

they worked in a different spirit; they followed the fashion of the hour. While he lived, his noble aims elevated them, but when he died they fell away one after another. The lavish and magnificent Pope Leo X. was succeeded in 1521 by Adrian VI., a man conscientious even to severity, sparing even to asceticism, and without any sympathies either for art or artists; during his short pontificate of two years all the works in the Vatican and St. Peter's were suspended; the poor painters were starving; and the dreadful pestilence which raged in 1523 drove many from the city. Under Clement VII., one of the Medici, and nephew of Leo X., the arts for a time revived; but the sack of Rome by the barbarous soldiery of Bourbon in 1527 completed the dispersion of the artists who had flocked to the capital: each returning to his native country or city, became also a teacher; and thus what was called "Raphael's School," or the "Roman School," was spread from one end of Italy to the other.

Raphael had left by his will his two favourite scholars, Gian Francesco Penni and Giulio Romano, as executors, and to them he bequeathed the task of completing his unfinished works.

Gian Francesco Penni, called Il Fattore, was his beloved and confidential pupil, and had assisted him much, particularly in preparing his cartoons; but everything he executed from his own mind and

after Raphael's death has, with much tenderness and *Raffaelesque* grace, a sort of feebleness more of mind than hand: his pictures are very rare. He died in 1528.

His brother LUCA PENNI was in England for some years in the service of Henry VIII., and employed by Wolsey in decorating his palace at Hampton Court; some remains of his performances there were still to be seen in the middle of the last century; but Horace Walpole's notion that Luca Penni executed those three singular pictures, the Field of the Cloth of Gold, the Battle of the Spurs, and the Embarkation of Henry VIII., appears to be quite unfounded.

Giulio Pippi, surnamed from the place of his birth Il Romano, and generally styled GIULIO ROMANO, was also much beloved by Raphael, and of all his scholars the most distinguished for original power. While under the influence of Raphael's mind, he imitated his manner and copied his pictures so successfully, that it is sometimes difficult for the best judges to distinguish the difference of hand. The Julius II. in our National Gallery is an instance. After Raphael's death he abandoned himself to his own luxuriant genius. He lost the simplicity, the grace, the chaste and elevated feeling which had characterised his master. He became strongly embued with the then reigning taste for classical and mythological subjects,

which he treated not exactly in a classical spirit, but with great boldness and fire, both in conception and execution. He did not excel in religious subjects: if he had to paint the Virgin, he gave her the air and form of a commanding Juno; if a Saviour, he was like a Roman emperor; the apostles in his pictures are like heathen philosophers; but when he had to deal with gods and Titans he was in his element.

For four years after the death of Raphael he was chiefly occupied in completing his master's unfinished works; at the end of that time he went to Mantua and entered the service of the Duke Gonzaga, as painter and architect. He designed for him a splendid palace called the Palazzo del Te, which he decorated with frescoes in a grand but coarse style. In one saloon he represented Jupiter vanquishing the giants; in another, the history of Psyche: everywhere we see great luxuriance of fancy, wonderful power of drawing, and a bold large style of treatment; but great coarseness of imagination, red heavy colouring, and a pagan rather than a *classical* taste.

In character, Giulio Romano was a man of generous mind; princely in his style of living; an accomplished courtier, yet commanding respect by a lofty sense of his own dignity as an artist. He amassed great riches in the service of the Duke Gonzaga, and spent his life at Mantua: his most



Group of Cupids.

important works are to be found in the palaces and churches of that city.

When Charles I. purchased the entire collection of the Dukes of Mantua in 1629, there were among them many pictures by Giulio Romano; one of these was the admirable copy of Raphael's fresco of the battle between Constantine and Maxentius, now in the guard-room at Hampton Court; in the same gallery are seven others, all mythological, and characteristic certainly, but by no means favourable specimens of his genius; they have besides been coarsely painted over by some restorer, so as to retain no trace of the original workmanship. The most important picture which came into the possession of King Charles was a Nativity, a large altar-piece, which after the king's death was sold into France: it is now in the Louvre (1075). A very pretty little picture is the Venus persuading Vulcan to forge the arrows of Cupid; also in the Louvre (1077), from which the group of Cupids in the illustration has been taken. Engravings after Giulio Romano are very commonly met with.

Giulio Romano was invited by Francis I. to undertake the decoration of his palace at Fontainebleau, but not being able to leave Mantua, he sent his pupil Primaticcio, who covered the walls with frescoes and arabesques, much in the manner of those in the Palazzo del Te; that is to say, with

gods and goddesses, fauns, satyrs, nymphs, Cupids, Cyclops, Titans, in a style as remote from that of Raphael as can well be imagined, and yet not destitute of a certain grandeur.

PRIMATICCIO, NICOLÒ DEL ABATE, ROSSO, and others who worked with them, are designated in the history of art as the "Fontainebleau School," of which Primaticcio is considered the chief.*

GIOVANNI DA UDINE, who excelled in painting animals, flowers, and still life, was Raphael's chief assistant in the famous arabesques of the Vatican.

PERINO DEL VAGA, another of Raphael's scholars, carried his style to Genoa, where he was chiefly employed; and ANDREA DI SALERNO, a far more charming painter, who was at Rome but a short time, has left many pictures at Naples, nearer to Raphael in point of feeling than those of other scholars who had studied under his eye for years: Andrea seems also to have been allied to his master in mind and character, for Raphael parted from him with deep regret.

POLIDORO CALDARA, called from the place of his birth Polidoro da Caravaggio, was a poor boy who had been employed by the fresco painters in the Vatican to carry the wet mortar and afterwards to grind their colours: he learned to admire, then

* The frescoes executed by these painters in the palace of Fontainebleau have lately been restored with admirable success by M. Alaux, a French painter of eminence.



Primaticcio.



From the Rape of the Sabines, by Polidoro.

to emulate what he saw, and Raphael encouraged and aided him by his instructions. The bent of Polidoro's genius as it developed itself was a curious and interesting compound of his two vocations. He had been a mason, or what we should call a bricklayer's boy, for the first twenty years of his life. From building houses he took to decorating them, and from an early familiarity with the remains of antiquity lying around him, the mind of the uneducated mechanic became unconsciously imbued with the very spirit of antiquity; not one of Raphael's scholars was so distinguished for a classical purity of taste as Polidoro. He painted chiefly in chiaro'scuro (that is, in two colours, light and shade), friezes, composed of processions of figures, such as we see in the ancient bas-reliefs, sea and river gods, tritons, bacchantes, fawns, satyrs, Cupids. At Hampton Court there are six pieces of a small narrow frieze, representing boys and animals, which apparently formed the top of a bedstead or some other piece of furniture; these will give some faint idea of the decorative style of Polidoro. This painter was much employed at Naples, and afterwards at Messina, where he was assassinated by one of his servants for the sake of his money.

PELLEGRINO DA MODENA, an excellent painter, and one of Raphael's most valuable assistants in his

Scriptural subjects, carried the "Roman School" to Modena.

At this time there was in Ferrara a school of painters very peculiar in style, distinguished chiefly by extreme elegance of execution, a miniature-like neatness in the details, and deep, vigorous, contrasted colours—as intense crimson, vivid green, brilliant white, approximated;—a little grotesque in point of taste, and rather like the very early German school in feeling and treatment, but with more grace and ideality. There is a picture in our National Gallery by Mazzolino da Ferrara (No. 82), which will give a very good idea of this style, both in its beauties and its singularities.

One of these Ferrarese painters, BENVENUTO GAROFALO, studied for some time at Rome in the school of Raphael, but it does not appear that he assisted, like most of the other students, in any of his works. He was older than Raphael, and already advanced in his art before he went to Rome; but while there he knew how to profit by the higher principles which were laid down, and studied assiduously; with a larger, freer style of drawing, and a certain elevation in the expression of his heads acquired in the school of Raphael, he combined the glowing colour which characterised the first painters of his native city. There is a small picture by Garofalo in our National Gallery (No. 81), which is a very



Garofalo.



Group from the Vision of St. Augustine, after Garofalo.

fair example of his style. The subject is a Vision of St. Augustine, rendered still more poetical by the introduction of the Virgin and Child above, and the figure of St. Catherine, who stands behind the saint. Garofalo's small pictures are not uncommon; his large pictures are chiefly confined to Ferrara and the churches around it.

TIBALDI of Bologna, INNOCENZA DA IMOLA, and TIMOTEO DELLA VITE were also painters of the Roman school, whose works are very seldom met with in England.

Another painter, who must not be omitted, was GIULIO CLOVIO. He was originally a monk, and began by imitating the miniatures in the illuminated missals and psalm-books used in the Church. He then studied at Rome, and was particularly indebted to Michael Angelo and Giulio Romano. His works are a proof that greatness and correctness of style do not depend on size and space; for into a few inches square, into the arabesque ornaments round a page of manuscript, he could throw a feeling of the sublime and beautiful worthy of the great masters of art. The vigour and precision of his drawing in the most diminutive figures, the imaginative beauty of some of his tiny compositions (for Giulio was no copyist), is almost inconceivable. His works were enormously paid, and executed only for sovereign princes and rich prelates. Fifteen years of his life were spent in the

service of Pope Paul III. (1534-1549), for whom his finest productions were executed. He died in 1578, at the age of eighty.

Besides the Italians many painters came from beyond the Alps to place themselves under the tuition of Raphael; among these were Bernard von Orlay from Brussels; Michael Coxcis from Mechlin; and George Penz from Nuremberg. But the influence of Raphael's mind and style is not very apparent in any of these painters, of whom we shall have more to say hereafter. By George Penz there is a beautiful portrait of Erasmus in the Royal Gallery at Windsor.

PEDRO CAMPANA, who was a great favourite of Charles V., carried the principles of the Roman school into Spain.

On the whole we may say that while Michael Angelo and Raphael displayed in all they did the inspiration of genius, their scholars and imitators inundated all Italy with mediocrity:

> "Art with hollow forms was fed,
> But the *soul* of art lay dead."



Correggio.

CORREGGIO AND GIORGIONE, AND THEIR SCHOLARS.

WHILE the great painters of the Florentine school, with Michael Angelo at their head, were carrying out the principle of *form*, and those of Rome—the followers and imitators of Raphael—were carrying out the principle of *expression*;—and the first school deviating into exaggeration, and the latter degenerating into mannerism—there arose in the north of Italy two extraordinary and original men, who, guided by their own individual genius and temperament, took up different principles and worked them out to perfection. One revelling in the illusions of *chiaro'scuro*, so that to him all nature appeared clothed in a soft transparent veil of lights and shadows; the other delighting in the luxurious depth of tints, and beholding all nature steeped in the glow of an Italian sunset. They chose each their world, and "drew after them a third part of heaven."

Of the two, Giorgione appears to have been the most original—the most of a creator and inventor. Correggio may possibly have owed his conception of melting, vanishing outlines and transparent sha-

dows, and his peculiar feeling of grace, to Lionardo da Vinci, whose pictures were scattered over the whole of the north of Italy. Giorgione found in his own fervid melancholy character the mystery of his colouring—warm, glowing, yet subdued—and the noble yet tender sentiment of his heads; characteristics which, transmitted to Titian, became in colouring more sunshiny and brilliant, without losing depth and harmony; and in expression, more cheerful, still retaining intellect and dignity.

We will speak first of Correggio, so styled from his birth-place, a small town not far from Modena, now called Reggio. His real name was Antonio Allegri, and he was born towards the end of the year 1493. Raphael was at this time ten years old, Michael Angelo twenty, and Lionardo da Vinci in his fortieth year. The father of Antonio was Pellegrino Allegri, a tradesman possessed of moderate property in houses and land. He gave his son a careful education, and had him instructed in literature and rhetoric, as well as in the rudiments of art, which he imbibed at a very early age from an uncle, Lorenzo Allegri, a painter of little merit. Afterwards he studied for a short time under Andrea Mantegna; and although, when this painter died in 1506, Antonio was but thirteen, he had so far profited by his instructions and those of Francesco Mantegna, who continued his father's school, that he drew well and caught that taste

and skill in foreshortening which distinguished his later works; it was an art which Mantegna may almost be said to have invented, and which was first taught in his academy;* but the dry, hard, precise, meagre style of the Mantegna school, Correggio soon abandoned for a manner entirely his own, in which movement, variety, and, above all, the most delicate gradation of light and shadow, are the principal elements. All these qualities are apparent in the earliest of his authenticated pictures painted in 1512 when he was about eighteen. It is one of the large altar-pieces in the Dresden gallery, called the Madonna di San Francesco, because St. Francis is one of the principal figures. The influence of the taste and manner of Lionardo da Vinci is very conspicuous in this picture.

In 1519, having acquired some reputation and fortune in his profession, Correggio married Girolama Merlini; and in the following year, being then six and twenty, he was commissioned to paint in fresco the cupola of the church of San Giovanni at Parma. He chose for his subject the Ascension of Christ, who in the centre appears soaring upwards into heaven, surrounded by the Twelve Apostles, seated around on clouds, and who appear to be watching his progress to the realms above; below are the four Evangelists in the four arches, with the four Fathers of the Church. The figures

* See vol. i. p. 151.

in the upper part are of course colossal, and foreshortened with admirable skill, so as to produce a wonderful effect when viewed from below. In the apsis of the same church, over the high altar, he painted the Coronation of the Virgin, but this was destroyed when the church was subsequently enlarged, and is now only known through engravings and the copies made by Annibal Carracci, which are preserved at Naples. For this work Correggio received five hundred gold crowns, equal to about 1500*l.* at the present day.

About the year 1525, Correggio was invited to Mantua, where he painted for the reigning Duke, Federigo Gonzaga, the Education of Cupid, which is now in our National Gallery. For the same accomplished but profligate prince he painted the other mythological stories of Io, Leda, Danaë, and Antiope.*

Passing over, for the present, a variety of works which Correggio painted in the next four or five years, we shall only observe that the Cupola of San Giovanni gave so much satisfaction that he was called upon to decorate in the same manner the cathedral of Parma, which is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In the centre of the dome he represented the Assumption—the Madonna soaring into heaven while Christ descends from his throne

* The Io and the Leda are in the Berlin Gallery; the Danaë in the Borghese Gallery; and the Antiope in the Louvre: the latter once belonged to King Charles.



St. John the Evangelist.

in bliss to meet her: an innumerable host of saints and angels, rejoicing and singing hymns of triumph, surround these principal personages. Lower down in a circle stand the Apostles, and, lower still, Genii bearing candelabra and swinging censers. In lunettes below are the four Evangelists, the figure of St. John in our illustration being one of the finest. The whole composition is full of glorious life; wonderful for the relief, the bold and perfect foreshortening, the management of the chiaro-'scuro; but from the innumerable figures, and the play of the limbs seen from below—legs and arms being more conspicuous than bodies—the great artist was reproached in his lifetime with having painted "un guazzetto di rane" (a fricassée of frogs).* There are several engravings of this magnificent work; but those who would form a just idea of Correggio's sublime conception and power of drawing, should see some of the cartoons prepared for the frescoes and drawn in chalk by Correggio's own hand. A few of these, representing chiefly angels and cherubim, were discovered a few years ago at Parma, rolled up in a garret: they were conveyed to Rome, thence brought to England by Dr. Braun, and are now in the British Museum, having been lately purchased by the trustees. These heads and forms are gigantic,

* In cookery only the hind-legs of the frogs are used; the bodies are thrown away.

nearly twice the size of life; yet such is the excellence of the drawing, and the perfect grace and sweetness of the expression, that they strike the fancy as sublimely beautiful, without giving the slightest impression of exaggeration or effort. Our artists who are preparing cartoons for works on a large scale could have no finer studies than these grand fragments, emanations of the mind and creations of the hand of one of the most distinguished masters in art. They show his manner of setting to work, and are in this respect an invaluable lesson to young painters.

Correggio finished the dome of the cathedral of Parma in 1530, and returned to his native town, where he resided for the remainder of his life. We find that in the year 1533 he was one of the witnesses to a marriage which was celebrated in the castle of Correggio, between Ippolito, Lord of Correggio, and son of Veronica Gambara, the illustrious poetess (widow of Ghiberto da Correggio), and Chiara da Correggio, his cousin. Correggio's presence on this occasion, and his signature to the marriage-deed, prove the estimation in which he was held by his sovereigns. In the following year he had engaged to paint for Alberto Panciroli an altar-piece; the subject fixed upon is not known, but it *is* certainly known that he received in advance, and before his work was commenced, twenty-five gold crowns. It was destined never

to be begun, for soon after signing this agreement Correggio was seized with a malignant fever, of which he died after a few days' illness, March 5, 1534, in the forty-first year of his age. He was buried in his family sepulchre in the Franciscan convent at Correggio, and a few words placed over his tomb merely record the day of his death, and his name and profession—"MAESTRO ANTONIO ALLEGRI, DEPINTORE."

There is a tradition that Correggio was a self-educated painter, unassisted except by his own transcendent genius; that he lived in great obscurity and indigence, and that he was ill remunerated for his works. And it is further related, that having been paid in copper coin a sum of sixty crowns for one of his pictures, he carried home this load in a sack on his shoulders, being anxious to relieve the wants of his family; and stopping, when heated and wearied, to refresh himself with a draught of cold water, he was seized with a fever, of which he died. Though this tradition has been proved to be false, and is completely refuted by the circumstances of the last years of his life related above, yet the impression that Correggio died miserably and in indigence prevailed to a late period.*

* The death of Correggio is the subject of a very beautiful tragedy by Œhlenschläger, of which there is a critical account, with translations, in one of the early volumes of 'Blackwood's Magazine.'

From whatever cause it arose, it was early current. Annibal Carracci, writing from Parma fifty years after the death of Correggio, says, "I rage and weep to think of the fate of this poor Antonio; so great a man—if, indeed, he were not rather an angel in the flesh—to be lost here, to live unknown, and to die unhappily!" Now he who painted the dome of the cathedral of Parma, and who stood by as one of the chosen witnesses of the marriage of his sovereign, could not have lived unknown and unregarded; and we have no just reason to suppose that this gentle, amiable, and unambitious man died unhappily. With regard to his deficient education, it appears certain that he studied anatomy under Lombardi, a famous physician of that time, and his works exhibit not only a classical and cultivated taste, but a knowledge of the sciences—of optics, mathematics, perspective, and chemistry, as far as they were then carried. His use and skilful preparation of rare and expensive colours imply neither poverty nor ignorance. His modest, quiet, amiable temper and domestic habits may have given rise to the report that he lived neglected and obscure in his native city; he had not, like other great masters of his time, an academy for teaching, and a retinue of scholars to spread his name and contend for the supremacy of their master. Whether Correggio ever visited Rome is a point undecided by any evidence for or against,

and it is most probable that he did not. It is said that he was at Bologna, where he saw Raphael's St. Cecilia, and, after contemplating it for some time with admiration, he turned away, exclaiming, "And I too am a painter (anch'io sono pittore)!" —an anecdote which shows that, if unambitious and unpresuming, he was not without a consciousness of his own merit.

The father of Correggio, Pellegrino Allegri, who survived him, repaid the twenty-five gold crowns which his son had received in advance for work he did not live to complete. The only son of Correggio, Pomponio Quirino Allegri, became a painter, but never attained to any great reputation, and appears to have been of a careless, restless disposition.

We shall now give some account of Correggio's works. His two greatest performances—the dome of the San Giovanni and that of the Cathedral of Parma have been mentioned. His smaller pictures, though not numerous, are diffused through so many galleries, that they cannot be said to be rare. It is remarkable that they are very seldom met with in the possession of individuals, but, with few exceptions, are to be found in royal and public collections.

In our National Gallery are five pictures by Correggio: two are studies of angels' heads, which, as they are not found in any of the existing fres-

coes, are supposed to have formed part of the composition in the San Giovanni, which, as already related, was destroyed. The other three are among his most celebrated works. The first, Mercury teaching Cupid to read in the presence of Venus, is an epitome of all the qualities which characterise the oil painter; that peculiar smiling grace which is the expression of a kind of Elysian happiness, and that flowing outline, that melting softness of tone, which are quite illusive. "Those who may not perfectly understand what artists and critics mean when they dwell with rapture on Correggio's wonderful *chiaro'scuro*, should look well into this picture. They will perceive that in the painting of the limbs they can look through the shadows into the substance, as it might be into the flesh and blood; the shadows seem mutable, accidental, and aërial, as if *between* the eye and the colours, and not incorporated with them. In this lies the inimitable excellence of Correggio.*

This picture was painted for Federigo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua; it was brought to England in 1629, when the Mantua Gallery was bought by our Charles I., and hung in his apartment at Whitehall; afterwards it passed into the possession of the Duke of Alva; then, during the French in-

* 'Public Galleries of Art,' Murray, 1841, in which there is a history of the picture, too long to be inserted here.

vasion of Spain, Murat secured it as his share of the plunder; and his widow sold it to the Marquess of Londonderry, from whom it was purchased by the nation. The Ecce Homo was purchased at the same time: it is chiefly remarkable for the fine head of the Virgin, who faints with anguish on beholding the suffering and degradation of her Son; the dying away of sense and sensation under the influence of mental pain is expressed with admirable and affecting truth: the rest of the picture is perhaps rather feeble, and the head of Christ not to be compared to one crowned with thorns which is in the possession of Lord Cowper, nor with another in the Bridgewater collection. The third picture is a small but most exquisite Madonna, known as the *Vierge au Panier*, from the little basket in front of the picture. The Virgin seated, holds the infant Christ on her knee, and looks down upon him with the fondest expression of maternal rapture, while he gazes up in her face. Joseph is seen in the background. This, though called a Holy Family, is a simple domestic scene; and Correggio probably in this, as in other instances, made the original study from his wife and child. Another picture in our gallery ascribed to Correggio, the Christ on the Mount of Olives, is a very fine old copy, perhaps a duplicate, of an original picture now in the possession of the Duke of Wellington.

In the gallery of Parma are five of the most important and beautiful pictures of Correggio. The most celebrated is that called the St. Jerome. It represents the saint presenting to the Virgin and Child his translation of the Scriptures, while on the other side the Magdalen bends down and kisses with devotion the feet of the infant Saviour.

The Dresden Gallery is also rich in pictures of Correggio: it contains six pictures, of which four are large altar-pieces, bought out of churches in Modena; among these is the famous picture of the Nativity, called the Notte, or *Night*, of Correggio, because it is illuminated only by the unearthly splendour which beams round the head of the infant Saviour; and the still more famous Magdalen, who lies extended on the ground intently reading the Scriptures. No picture in the world has been more universally admired and multiplied through copies and engravings, than this little picture.

In the Florence Gallery are three pictures; one of them, the Madonna on her knees, adoring with ecstasy her Infant who lies before her on a portion of her garment, is given in our illustration.

In the Louvre are two of his works—the Marriage of St. Catherine, and the Antiope, painted for the Duke of Mantua.

In the Naples Gallery there are three; one of them a most lovely Madonna, called, from the peculiar head-dress, the Zingarella, or Gipsy.



Madonna and Child.

In the Vienna Gallery are two; and at Berlin three—among them the Io and the Leda.

There is in the British Museum a complete collection of engravings after Correggio.

Correggio had no school of painting, and all his authentic works, except his frescoes, were executed solely by his own hand: in the execution of his frescoes he had assistants, but they could hardly be called his *pupils*. He had, however, a host of imitators who formed what has been called the School of Parma, of which he is considered the head. The most famous of these imitators was Francesco Mazzola, of whom we are now to speak.

PARMIGIANO:

Born 1503; died 1540.

Francesco Mazzola, or Mazzuoli, called Parmigiano, and, by the Italians, Il Parmigianino (to express by this endearing diminutive the love as well as the admiration he inspired even from his boyhood), was a native of Parma, born on the 11th of January, 1503. He had two uncles who were painters, and by them he was early initiated into some knowledge of designing, though he could have owed little else to them, both being very mediocre artists. Endowed with a most precocious genius, ardent in every pursuit, he studied

indefatigably, and at the age of fourteen he produced a picture of the Baptism of Christ, wonderful for a boy of his age, exhibiting even thus early much of that easy grace which he is supposed to have learned from Correggio; but Correggio had not then visited Parma. When he arrived there four years afterwards, for the purpose of painting the Cupola of San Giovanni, Francesco, then only eighteen, was selected as one of his assistants, and he took this opportunity of imbuing his mind with a style which certainly had much analogy with his own taste and character: Parmigiano however had too much genius, too much ambition, to follow in the footsteps of another, however great. Though not great enough himself to be first in that age of greatness, yet had his rivals and contemporaries been less than giants, he must have overtopped them all; as it was, feeling the impossibility of rising above such men as Michael Angelo, Raphael, Correggio, yet feeling also the consciousness of his own power, he endeavoured to be original by combining what has not yet been harmonised in nature, therefore could hardly succeed in art—the grand drawing of Michael Angelo, the antique grace of Raphael, and the melting tones and sweetness of Correggio. Perhaps, had he been satisfied to look at nature through his own soul and eyes, he would have done better; had he trusted himself more, he would have escaped some of those faults



Parmigiano.

which have rendered many of his works unpleasing, by giving the impression of effort, and of what in art is called *mannerism*. Ambitious, versatile, accomplished, generally admired for his handsome person and graceful manners, Parmigiano would have been spoiled by vanity, if he had not been a man of strong sensibility and of almost fastidious sentiment and refinement; when these are added to genius, the result is generally a tinge of that melancholy, of that dissatisfaction with all that is achieved or acquired, which seem to have entered largely into the temperament of this painter, rendering his character and life extremely interesting, while it strongly distinguishes him from the serenely mild and equal-tempered Raphael, to whom he was afterwards compared.

When Parmigiano was in his twentieth year, he set off for Rome. The recent accession of Clement VII., a declared patron of art, and the death of Raphael, had opened a splendid vista of glory and success to his imagination. He carried with him to Rome three pictures. One of these was an example of his graceful genius; it represented the Infant Christ seated on his mother's knee, and taking some fruit from the lap of an angel. The second was a proof of his wonderful dexterity of hand: it was a portrait of himself seated in his atelier amid his books and musical instruments; but the whole scene represented on the panel as if

viewed in a convex mirror. The third picture was an instance of the success with which he had studied the magical effects of chiaro'scuro in Correggio—torchlight, daylight, and a celestial light being all introduced without disturbing the harmony of the colouring. This last he presented to the pope, who received both the young painter and his offering most graciously. He became a favourite at Rome, and as he studiously imitated while there the works of Raphael, and resembled him in the elegance of his person and manners, and the generosity of his disposition, the poets complimented him by saying, or singing, that the late-lost and lamented Raphael had revived in the likeness of Parmigiano: we can now measure more justly the distance which separated them.

While at Rome, Francesco was greatly patronised by the Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, and painted for him several beautiful pictures; for the pope also, several others, and the portrait of a young captain of his guard, Lorenzo Cibo, which is supposed to be the fine portrait now at Windsor. For a noble lady, a certain Donna Maria Buffalini, he painted a grand altar-piece to adorn the chapel of her family at Città di Castello. This is the celebrated Vision of St. Jerome, now in our National Gallery: it represents the Virgin holding a book, with the Infant Christ leaning on her knee, as seen above in a glory, while St. John the Bap-

tist points to the celestial vision, and St. Jerome is seen asleep in the background. This picture is an eminent example of all the beauties and faults of Parmigiano. The Madonna and the Child are models of dignity and grace; the drawing is correct and elegant; the play of the lights and shadows, in delicate management, worthy of Correggio: on the other hand, the attitude of St. John the Baptist is an attempt at singularity in drawing, which is altogether forced and theatrical; while the foreshortened figure of St. Jerome in the background is most *uncomfortably* distorted. Notwithstanding these faults, the picture has always been much celebrated. When the church in which it stood was destroyed by an earthquake, the picture was purchased from among the ruins, and afterwards sold to the Marquis of Abercorn for fifteen hundred guineas; subsequently it passed through the hands of two great collectors, Mr. Hart Davis and Mr. Watson Taylor, and was at length purchased by the members of the British Institution, and by them generously presented to the nation.

It is related that Rome was taken by assault and pillaged by the barbarous soldiery of the Constable de Bourbon, at the very time that Parmigiano was painting on this picture, and that he was so absorbed by his work, that he heard nothing of the tumult around him till some soldiers, with an officer at their head, broke into his atelier. As he

turned round in quiet surprise from his easel, they were so struck by the beauty of his work, as well as by the composure of the artist, that they retired without doing him any injury. But another party afterwards seized him, insisted on ransom, and robbed him of all he possessed. Thus reduced to poverty, he fled from Rome, now a scene of indescribable horrors, and reached Bologna barefoot and penniless.

But the man of genius has at least this high privilege, that he carries with him everywhere two things of which no earthly power can rob him—his talent and his fame. On arriving at Bologna, he drew and etched some beautiful compositions. He is said by some to have himself invented the art of *etching*,—that is, of corroding, or, as it is technically termed, *biting* the lines on the copper-plate by means of nitrous acid, instead of cutting them with the graver. By this new-found art he was relieved from the immediate pressure of poverty, and very soon found himself, as a painter, in full employment. He executed at Bologna some of his most celebrated works: the Madonna della Rosa of the Dresden Gallery, and the Madonna *dell' collo lungo* (or *long-necked* Madonna) in the Pitti Palace at Florence; also, a famous altar-piece called the St. Margaret: of all these there are numerous engravings.

After residing nearly four years at Bologna,

Parmigiano returned, rich and celebrated, to his native city. He reached Parma in 1531, and was immediately engaged to paint in fresco a new church which had recently been erected to the honour of the Virgin Mary, and called the *Steccata*. There were, however, some delays on the side of his employers, and more on his own, and four years passed before he set to work. Much indignation was excited by his dilatory conduct; but it was appeased by the interference of his friend Francesco Boiardo, who offered himself as his surety for the completion of his undertaking within a given time. A new contract was signed, and Parmigiano thereupon presented to his friend his picture of Cupid framing his Bow, a lovely composition; so beautiful, that it has been again and again attributed to Correggio, and engraved under his name, but it is undoubtedly by Parmigiano. Several repetitions of it were executed at the time, so much did it delight all who saw it. Engravings and copies likewise abound; a very good copy is in the Bridgewater Gallery: the picture which is regarded as the original is in the gallery of the Belvedere at Vienna.

At last he began his works in the Steccata, and there he executed his figure of Moses in act to break the Tables of the Law, and his Eve in act to pluck the forbidden fruit: the former is a proof of the height he could aspire to in sublime con-

ception; we have few examples in art of equal grandeur of character and drawing: the poet Gray acknowledged that when he pictured his Bard,

> "Loose his beard and hoary hair
> Streamed like a meteor on the troubled air,"

he had this magnificent figure full in his mind. The Eve, on the other hand, is a perfect example of that peculiar grace in which Parmigiano excelled.

After he had painted these and a few other figures in the church, more delays ensued. It is said by some that Parmigiano had wasted his money in gambling and dissipation, and now gave himself up to the pursuit of the philosopher's stone, with a hope of repairing his losses. One of his biographers has taken pains to disprove these imputations; but that he was improvident, restless, and fond of pleasure, is admitted. Whatever might have been the cause, he broke his contract, and was thrown into prison. To obtain his freedom, he entered into a new engagement, but was no sooner at liberty than he escaped to the territory of Cremona. Here his constitutional melancholy seized him; and though he lived, or rather languished, long enough to paint some beautiful pictures, he died in a few months afterwards, and was, at his own request, laid in the earth without any coffin or covering, only a cross of cypress-wood was placed on his breast. He died just twenty years after Raphael,



Moses breaking the Tables.

and at the same age, having only completed his thirty-seventh year.

Parmigiano, in his best pictures, is one of the most fascinating of painters—dignified, graceful, harmonious. His children, cupids, and angels are, in general, exquisite; his portraits are noble, and are perhaps his finest and most faultless productions —the Moses and the Eve excepted. It was the error of Parmigiano that in studying grace he was apt to deviate into affectation, and become what the French call *manière*: all *studied* grace is disagreeable. In his female figures he lengthened the limbs, the necks, the fingers, till the effect was not grace, but a kind of stately feebleness; and as he imitated at the same time the grand drawing and large manner of Michael Angelo, the result conveys an impression of something quite incongruous in nature and in art. Then his Madonnas have in general a mannered grandeur and elegance, something between goddesses and duchesses; and his female saints are something between nymphs and maids of honour. For instance, none of his compositions, not even the Cupid shaping his Bow, has been more popular than his Marriage of St. Catherine, of which there are so many repetitions; a famous one in the collection of Lord Normanton; another, smaller and most exquisite, in the Grosvenor Gallery—not to speak of an infinitude of copies and engravings; but is not the Madonna

with her long slender neck and her half-averted head far more aristocratic than divine? and does not St. Catherine hold out her pretty finger for the ring with the air of a lady-bride?—and most of the sacred pictures of Parmigiano are liable to the same censure. Annibal Carracci, in a famous sonnet, in which he pointed out what was most worthy of imitation in the elder painters, recommends, significantly, "a little" of the grace of Parmigiano; thereby indicating, what we feel to be the truth, that he had *too much*.

GIORGIONE:

Born 1478; died 1511.

THIS painter was another great *inventor;* one of those who stamped his own individuality on his art. He was essentially a poet, and a *subjective* poet, who fused his own being with all he performed and created:—if Raphael be the Shakspere, then Giorgione may be styled the Byron, of painting.

He was born at Castel Franco, a small town in the territory of Treviso, and his proper name was Giorgio Barbarelli. Nothing is known of his family or of his younger years, except that having shown a strong disposition to art, he was brought, when a boy, to Venice, and placed under the tui-



Giorgione.

tion of Gian Bellini. As he grew up he was distinguished by his tall noble figure and the dignity of his deportment; and his companions called him Giorgione, or George the Great, by which nickname he has, after the Italian fashion, descended to posterity.

Giorgione appears to have been endowed by nature with an intense love of beauty and a sense of harmony which pervaded his whole being. He was famous as a player and composer on the lute, to which he sung his own verses. In his works two characteristics prevail, sentiment and colour; both tinged by the peculiar temperament of the man: the sentiment is noble, but melancholy, and the colour decided, intense, and glowing. His execution had a freedom, a careless mastery of hand, or, to borrow the untranslateable Italian word, a *sprezzatura*, unknown before his time. The idea that he founded his style on that of Lionardo da Vinci cannot be entertained by those who have studied the works of both: nothing can be more distinct in character and feeling.

It is to be regretted that of one so interesting in his character and his works we know so little; yet more to be regretted, that a being gifted with the passionate sensibility of a poet should have been employed chiefly in decorative painting, and that too confined to the outsides of the Venetian palaces. These creations have been destroyed by fire, ruined

by time, or effaced by the damps of the Lagune. He appears to have early acquired fame in his art, and we find him in 1504 employed, together with Titian, in painting with frescoes the exterior of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi (the hall of Exchange belonging to the German merchants). That part intrusted to Giorgione he covered with the most beautiful and poetical figures; but the significance of the whole was soon after the artist's death forgotten; and Vasari tells us, that in his time no one could interpret it. It appears to have been a sort of arabesque on a colossal scale.

Giorgione delighted in fresco as a vehicle, because it gave him ample scope for that largeness and freedom of outline which characterised his manner; unhappily, of his numerous works, only the merest fragments remain. We have no evidence that he exercised his art elsewhere than at Venice, or that he ever resided out of the Venetian territory: in his pictures the heads, features, costumes, are all stamped with the Venetian character. He had no school, though, induced by his social and affectionate nature, he freely imparted what he knew, and often worked in conjunction with others. His love of music and his love of pleasure sometimes led him astray from his art, but were oftener his inspirers: both are embodied in his pictures, particularly his exquisite pastorals and concerts, over which, however, he has breathed

that cast of thoughtfulness and profound feeling which, in the midst of harmony and beauty, is like a revelation or a prophecy of sorrow. All the rest of what is recorded concerning the life and death of Giorgione may be told in a few words. Among the painters who worked with him was Pietro Luzzo, of Feltri, near Venice, known in the history of art as Morta da Feltri, and mentioned by Vasari as the inventor, or rather reviver, of arabesque painting, in the antique style, which he had studied amid the dark vaults of the Roman ruins. This Morto, as Ridolfi relates, was the friend of Giorgione, and lived under the same roof with him. He took advantage of Giorgione's confidence to seduce and carry off from his house a girl whom he passionately loved. Wounded doubly by the falsehood of his mistress and the treachery of his friend, Giorgione sank into despair and soon afterwards died, at the early age of thirty-three. Morto da Feltri afterwards fled from Venice, entered the army, and was killed at the battle of Zara in 1519. Such is the Venetian tradition.

Giorgione's genuine pictures are very rarely to be met with; of those ascribed to him the greater number were painted by Pietro della Vecchia, a Venetian, who had a peculiar talent for imitating Giorgione's manner of execution and style of colour. These imitations deceive picture dealers and collectors; they could not for one moment deceive

those who had looked into the *feeling* impressed on Giorgione's works. The only picture which could have imposed on the true lover of Giorgione is that in the possession of Lord Francis Egerton, the Four Ages, by Titian, in which the tone of sentiment as well as the manner of Giorgione are so happily imitated that for many years it was attributed to him. It was painted by Titian when he was the friend and daily companion of Giorgione, and under the immediate influence of his feelings and genius.

We may divide the undoubted and existing pictures of Giorgione into three classes.

I. The historical subjects, which are very uncommon; such seem to have been principally confined to his frescoes, and have mostly perished. Of the few which remain to us, the most famous is a picture in the Brera at Milan, the Finding of Moses. It may be called rather a *romantic* and poetical version than an historical representation of the scene:—it would shock Sir Gardner Wilkinson. In the centre sits the princess under a tree; she looks with surprise and tenderness on the child, which is brought to her by one of her attendants: the squire or seneschal of the princess, with knights and ladies, stand around; on one side two lovers are seated on the grass; on the other are musicians and singers, pages with dogs. All the figures are in the Venetian costume; the co-

louring is splendid, and the grace and harmony of the whole composition is even the more enchanting from the *naïveté* of the conception. This picture, like many others of the same age and style, reminds us of those poems and tales of the middle ages, in which David and Jonathan figure as "*preux chevaliers*," and Sir Alexander of Macedon and Sir Paris of Troy fight tournaments in honour of ladies' eyes and the "blessed Virgin." They must be tried by their own aim and standard, not by the severity of antiquarian criticism.

In the Academy of Venice is preserved another historical picture yet more wildly poetical in conception. It commemorates a fact — a dreadful tempest which occurred in 1340, and threatened to overwhelm the whole city of Venice. In Giorgione's picture the demons are represented in an infernal bark exciting the tempest, while St. Mark, St. Nicholas, and St. George, the patron saints of Venice, seated in a small vessel tossed amid the waves, oppose with spiritual arms the powers of hell, and prevail against them.

In our National Gallery there is a small historical picture, the death of Peter, the Dominican friar and inquisitor, called St. Peter the Martyr, who was assassinated. This picture is not of much value, and a very inferior work of the master.

Sacred subjects of the usual kind were so seldom

painted by Giorgione, that there are not perhaps half a dozen in existence.

II. There is a class of subjects which Giorgione represented with peculiar grace and felicity: they are in painting what idyls and lyrics are in poetry, and seem like direct inventions of the artist's own mind, though some are supposed to be scenes from Venetian tales and novels now lost. These generally represent groups of cavaliers and ladies seated in beautiful landscapes under the shade of trees, conversing or playing on musical instruments. Such pictures are not unfrequent, and have a particular charm, arising from the union of melancholy feeling with luxurious and festive enjoyment, and a mysterious allegorical significance now only to be surmised. In the collection of Lord Northwick, at Cheltenham, there is a most charming picture in this style: and in the possession of Mr. Cunningham there is another. To this class may also be referred the exquisite pastoral group of Jacob and Rachel in the Dresden Gallery.

III. His portraits are magnificent. They have all, with the strongest resemblance to general nature, a grand ideal cast; for it was in the character of the man to idealise everything he touched. Very few of his portraits are now to be identified. Among the finest and most interesting



Concert Champêtre. From a Picture in the Louvre.

may be mentioned his own portrait in the Munich Gallery, which has an expression of the profoundest melancholy. In the Imperial Gallery at Vienna—rich in his works—there is a picture representing a young man crowned with a garland of vine-leaves; another comes behind him with a concealed dagger, and appears to watch the moment to strike: the expression in the two heads can never be forgotten by those who have looked on them. The fine portrait of a cavalier, with a page riveting his armour, is well known: it is in the possession of the Earl of Carlisle, and styled, without much probability, Gaston de Foix. A beautiful little full-length figure in armour, now in the collection of Mr. Rogers, bears the same name; and is probably a study for a St. Michael or a St. George. Lord Byron has celebrated in some beautiful lines the impression made on his mind by a picture in the Manfrini Palace at Venice; but the poet errs in styling it the "portraits of his son, and wife, and self:" Giorgione never had either son or wife. The picture alluded to represents a Venetian lady, a cavalier, and a page;—portraits evidently, but the names are unknown.

The striking characteristic of all Giorgione's pictures, whether portraits, ideal heads, or compositions, is the ineffaceable impression they leave on the memory—the impression of *reality*. In the

apparent simplicity of the means through which this effect is produced, the few yet splendid colours, the vigorous decision of touch, the depth and tenderness of the sentiment, they remind us of the old religious music to which we have listened in the Italian churches—a few simple notes, long sustained, deliciously blended, swelling into a rich, full, and perfect harmony, and melting into the soul.

Though Giorgione left no scholars, properly so called, he had many imitators, and no artist of his time exercised a more extensive and long-felt influence. He diffused that taste for vivid and warm colour which we see in contemporary and succeeding artists; and he tinged with his manner and feeling the whole Venetian school. Among those who were inspired by this powerful and ardent mind, may be mentioned Sebastian del Piombo, of whom some account has already been given (see p. 153); Jacopo Palma, called *Old* Palma, b. 1518, d. 1548; Paris Bordone, b. 1500, d. 1570; Pordenone, b. 1486, d. 1540; and, lastly, TITIAN, the great representative of the Venetian school. The difference between Giorgione and Titian, as colourists, seems to be this, that the colours of Giorgione appear as if lighted up from within, and those of Titian as if lighted from without. The epithet *fiery* or *glowing* would apply to Giorgione; the epithet *golden* would express the predominant hues of Titian.

TITIAN:

Born 1477; died 1576.

Tiziano Vecelli was born at Cadore in the Friuli, a district to the north of Venice, where the ancient family of the Vecelli had been long settled. There is something very amusing and characteristic in the first indication of his love of art; for while it is recorded of other young artists that they took a piece of charcoal or a piece of slate to trace the images in their fancy, we are told that the infant Titian, with an instinctive feeling prophetic of his future excellence as a colourist, used the expressed juice of certain flowers to paint a figure of a Madonna. When he was a boy of nine years old his father Gregorio carried him to Venice and placed him under the tuition of Sebastian Zuccato, a painter and worker in mosaic. He left this school for that of the Bellini, where the friendship and fellowship of Giorgione seems early to have awakened his mind to new ideas of art and colour. Albert Durer, who was at Venice in 1494, and again in 1507, also influenced him. At this time, when Titian and Giorgione were youths of eighteen and nineteen, they lived and worked together. It has been already related that

they were employed in painting the frescoes of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi; the preference being given to Titian's performance, which represented the story of Judith, caused such a jealousy between the two friends, that they ceased to reside together; but at this time and for some years afterwards the influence of Giorgione on the mind and the style of Titian was such that it became difficult to distinguish their works; and on the death of Giorgione, Titian was required to complete his unfinished pictures. This great loss to Venice and the world left him in the prime of youth without a rival. We find him for a few years chiefly employed in decorating the palaces of the Venetian nobles, both in the city and on the mainland. The first of his historical compositions which is celebrated by his biographers is the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, a large picture, now in the Academy of Arts at Venice; and the first portrait recorded is that of Catherine, Queen of Cyprus, of which numerous repetitions and copies were scattered over all Italy: there is a fine original in the Dresden Gallery. This unhappy Catherine Cornaro, the "daughter of St. Mark," having been forced to abdicate her crown in favour of the Venetian State, was at this time living in a sort of honourable captivity at Venice. She had been a widow for forty years, and he has represented her in deep mourning holding a rosary



Titian.

in her hand—the face still bearing traces of that beauty for which she was celebrated.

It appears that Titian was married about 1512; but of his wife we do not hear anything more. It is said that her name was Lucia, and we know that she bore him three children, two sons, and a daughter called Lavinia. It seems probable, on a comparison of dates, that she died about the year 1530.

One of the earliest works on which Titian was engaged was the decoration of the convent of St. Antony at Padua, in which he executed a series of frescoes from the life of St. Antony. He was next summoned to Ferrara by the Duke Alphonso I., and was employed in his service for at least two years. He painted for this prince the beautiful picture of Bacchus and Ariadne, which is now in our National Gallery, and which presents on a small scale an epitome of all the beauties which characterise Titian, in the rich, picturesque, animated composition, in the ardour of Bacchus, who flings himself from his car to pursue Ariadne; the dancing bacchanals, the frantic grace of the bacchante, and the little joyous satyr in front, trailing the head of the sacrifice. He painted for the same prince two other festive subjects: one in which a nymph and two men are dancing, while another nymph lies asleep; and a third in which a number of children and cupids are sporting round a statue

of Venus. There are here upwards of sixty figures in every variety of attitude, some fluttering in the air, some climbing the fruit-trees, some shooting arrows, or embracing each other. This picture is known as the Sacrifice to the Goddess of Fertility: while it remained in Italy it was a study for the first painters, for Poussin, the Carracci, Albano, and Fiamingo the sculptor, so famous for his models of children.* At Ferrara, Titian also painted the portrait of the first wife of Alphonso, the famous and infamous Lucrezia Borgia; and here also he formed a friendship with the poet Ariosto, whose portrait he painted.

At this time he was invited to Rome by Leo X., for whom Raphael, then in the zenith of his powers, was executing some of his finest works. It is curious to speculate what influence these two distinguished men might have exercised on each other had they met; but it was not so decreed. Titian was strongly attached to his home and his friends at Venice; and to his birthplace, the little town of Cadore, he paid an annual summer visit. His long absence at Ferrara had wearied him of courts and princes; and, instead of going to Rome to swell the luxurious state of Leo X., he returned to Venice and remained there stationary for the next few years,

* These two pictures are now at Madrid. A good copy of the last used to hang in the dark at Hampton Court, and has been lately removed to Windsor.

enriching its palaces and churches with his magnificent works. These were so numerous that it would be in vain to attempt to give an account even of those considered as the finest among them. Two, however, must be pointed out as pre-eminent in beauty and celebrity: first, the Assumption of the Virgin, painted for the church of Santa Maria de' Frari, and now in the Academy of the Fine Arts at Venice, and well known from the magnificent engraving of Schiavone; the Virgin is soaring to heaven amid groups of angels, while the apostles gaze upwards: and, secondly, the Death of St. Peter Martyr when attacked by assassins at the entrance of a wood; the resignation of the prostrate victim and the ferocity of the murderer, the attendant flying "in the agonies of cowardice," with the trees waving their distracted boughs amid the violence of the tempest, have rendered this picture famous as a piece of scenic poetry as well as of dramatic expression.

The next event of Titian's life was his journey to Bologna in 1530. In that year the Emperor Charles V. and Pope Clement VII. met at Bologna, each surrounded by a brilliant retinue of the most distinguished soldiers, statesmen, and scholars of Germany and Italy. Through the influence of his friend Aretino, Titian was recommended to the Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, the Pope's nephew, through whose patronage he was introduced to the

two potentates who sat to him; one of the portraits of Clement VII., painted at this time, is now in the Bridgewater Gallery. Charles V. was so satisfied with his portrait, that he became the zealous friend and patron of the painter. It is not precisely known which of several portraits of the emperor painted by Titian was the one executed at Bologna on this memorable occasion, but it is supposed to be that which represents him on horseback charging with his lance, now in the Royal Gallery at Madrid, and of which Mr. Rogers possesses the original study. The two portraits of Ippolito de' Medici in the Pitti Palace and the Louvre were also painted at this period.

After a sojourn of some months at Bologna, Titian returned to Venice loaded with honours and rewards. There was no potentate, prince, or poet, or reigning beauty, who did not covet the honour of being immortalized by his pencil. He had up to this time managed his worldly affairs with great economy, but now he purchased for himself a house opposite to Murano, and lived splendidly, combining with the most indefatigable industry the liveliest enjoyment of existence; his favourite companions were the architect Sansovino and the witty profligate Pietro Aretino. Titian has often been reproached with his friendship for Aretino, and nothing can be said in his excuse, except that the proudest princes in Europe condescended to flatter

and caress this unprincipled literary ruffian, who was pleased to designate himself as the "friend of Titian, and the scourge of princes." One of the finest of Titian's portraits is that of Aretino in the Munich Gallery.

Thus in the practice of his art, in the society of his friends, and in the enjoyment of the pleasures of life, did Titian pass several years. The only painter of his time who was deemed worthy of competing with him was Licinio Regillo, better known as Pordenone. Between Titian and Pordenone there existed not merely rivalry, but a personal hatred, so bitter that Pordenone affected to think his life in danger, and when at Venice painted with his shield and poniard lying beside him. As long as Pordenone lived, Titian had a spur to exertion, to emulation; all the other good painters of the time, Palma, Bonifazio, Tintoretto, were his pupils or his creatures; Pordenone would never owe anything to him; and the picture called the St. Justina, at Vienna, shows that he could equal Titian on his own ground.

After the death of Pordenone at Ferrara, in 1539, Titian was left without a rival; everywhere in Italy art was on the decline; Lionardo, Raphael, Correggio, had all passed away. Titian himself, at the age of sixty, was no longer young, but he still retained all the vigour and the freshness of youth;

neither eye nor hand, nor creative energy of mind, had failed him yet. He was again invited to Ferrara, and painted there the portrait of the old pope Paul III. He then visited Urbino, where he painted for the duke the famous Venus which hangs in the Tribune of the Florence Gallery, and many other pictures. He again, by order of Charles V., repaired to Bologna, and painted the emperor, standing, and by his side a favourite Irish wolf-dog: this picture was given by Philip IV. to our Charles I., but after his death was sold into Spain, and is now at Madrid.

Pope Paul III. invited him to Rome, whither he repaired in 1548. There he painted that wonderful picture of the old pope with his two nephews, the Duke Ottavio and Cardinal Farnese, which is now at Vienna. The head of the pope is a miracle of character and expression: a keen-visaged, thin little man, with meagre fingers like birds'-claws, and an eager cunning look, riveting the gazer like the eye of a snake—nature itself!—and the pope had either so little or so much vanity as to be perfectly satisfied: he rewarded the painter munificently; he even offered to make his son Pomponio Bishop of Ceneda, which Titian had the good sense to refuse. While at Rome he painted several pictures for the Farnese family, among them the Venus and Adonis, of which a repetition is in our



Group from the Venus and Adonis

National Gallery, and a Danaë which excited the admiration of Michael Angelo. At this time Titian was seventy-two.

He next, by command of Charles V., repaired to Augsburgh, where the emperor held his court: eighteen years had elapsed since he first sat to Titian, and he was now broken by the cares of government—far older at fifty than the painter at seventy-two. It was at Augsburgh that the incident occurred which has been so often related: Titian dropped his pencil, and Charles taking it up and presenting it, replied to the artist's excuses that "Titian was worthy of being served by Cæsar." This pretty anecdote is not without its parallel in modern times. When Sir Thomas Lawrence was painting at Aix-la-Chapelle, as he stooped to place a picture on his easel, the Emperor of Russia anticipated him, and taking it up adjusted it himself; but we do not hear that he made any speech on the occasion. When at Augsburgh, Titian was ennobled and created a count of the empire, with a pension of two hundred gold ducats, and his son Pomponio was appointed canon of the cathedral of Milan. After the abdication and death of Charles V., Titian continued in great favour with his successor Philip II., for whom he painted several pictures. It is not true, however, that Titian visited Spain: the assertion that he did so rests on the sole authority of Palomino, a Spanish writer on

art, and though wholly unsupported by evidence, has been copied from one book into another. Later researches have proved that Titian returned from Augsburgh to Venice; and an uninterrupted series of letters and documents, with dates of time and place, remain to show that, with the exception of this visit to Augsburgh and another to Vienna, he resided constantly in Italy, and principally at Venice, from 1530 to his death. Notwithstanding the compliments and patronage and nominal rewards he received from the Spanish court, Titian was worse off under Philip II. than he had been under Charles V.; his pension was constantly in arrears; the payments for his pictures evaded by the officials; and we find the great painter constantly presenting petitions and complaints in moving terms, which always obtained gracious but illusive answers. Philip II., who commanded the riches of the Indies, was for many years a debtor to Titian for at least two thousand gold crowns; and his accounts were not settled at the time of his death. For our Queen Mary of England, who wished to patronize one favoured by her husband, Titian painted several pictures, some of which were in the possession of Charles I.; others had been carried to Spain after the death of Mary, and are now in the Royal Gallery at Madrid.

Besides the pictures painted by command for royal and noble patrons, Titian, who was un-

ceasingly occupied, had always a great number of pictures in his house which he presented to his friends, or to the officers and attendants of the court, as a means of procuring their favour. There is extant a letter of Aretino, in which he describes the scene which took place when the emperor summoned his favourite painter to attend the court at Augsburgh. "It was," he says, "the most flattering testimony to his excellence to behold, as soon as it was known that the divine painter was sent for, the crowds of people running to obtain, if possible, the productions of his art; and how they endeavoured to purchase the pictures, great and small, and everything that was in the house, at any price; for everybody seems assured that his august majesty will so treat his Apelles that he will no longer condescend to exercise his pencil except to oblige him."

Years passed on, and seemed to have no power to quench the ardour of this wonderful old man. He was eighty-one when he painted the Martyrdom of St. Laurence, one of his largest and grandest compositions. The Magdalen, the half-length figure with uplifted streaming eyes, which he sent to Philip II., was executed even later: and it was not till he was approaching his ninetieth year that he showed in his works symptoms of enfeebled powers; and then it seemed as if sorrow rather than time had reached him and conquered him at

last. The death of many friends, the companions of his convivial hours, left him "alone in his glory:" he found in his beloved art the only refuge from grief. His son Pomponio was still the same worthless profligate in age that he had been in youth: his son Orazio attended upon him with truly filial duty and affection, and under his father's tuition had become an accomplished artist; but as they always worked together, and on the same canvas, his works are not to be distinguished from his father's. Titian was likewise surrounded by painters who, without being precisely his scholars, had assembled from every part of Europe to profit by his instructions.* The early morning and the evening hour found him at his easel; or lingering in his little garden (where he had feasted with Aretino and Sansovino, and Bembo and Ariosto, and "the most gracious Virginia," and "the most beautiful Violante"), and gazing on the setting sun, with a thought perhaps of his own long and bright career fast hastening to its close;—not that such anticipations clouded his cheerful spirit—buoyant to the last! In 1574, when he was in his ninety-seventh year, Henry III. of France landed at Venice on his way from Poland, and was magnificently entertained by the Republic. On this

* It seems, however, generally admitted that Titian, either from impatience or jealousy, or both, was a very bad instructor in his art.

occasion the king visited Titian at his own house, attended by a numerous suite of princes and nobles. Titian entertained them with splendid hospitality; and when the king asked the price of some pictures which pleased him, he presented them as a gift to his majesty, and every one praised his easy and noble manners and his generous bearing.

Two years more passed away, and the hand did not yet tremble nor was the eye dim. When the plague broke out in Venice, in 1576, the nature of the distemper was at first mistaken, and the most common precautions neglected; the contagion spread, and Titian and his son were among those who perished: every one had fled, and before life was extinct some ruffians entered his chamber and carried off, before his eyes, his money, jewels, and some of his pictures. His death took place on the 9th of September, 1575. A law had been made during the plague that none should be buried in the churches, but that all the dead bodies should be carried beyond the precincts of the city; an exception, however, even in that hour of terror and anguish, was made in favour of Titian: his remains were borne with honour to the tomb and deposited in the church of Santa Maria de' Frari, for which he had painted his famous Assumption. There he lies beneath a plain black marble slab, on which is simply inscribed

"TIZIANO VECELLIO."

In the year 1794 the citizens of Venice resolved to erect a noble and befitting monument to his memory. Canova made the design;—but the troubles which intervened, and the extinction of the Republic, prevented the execution of this project. Canova's magnificent model was appropriated to another purpose, and now forms the cenotaph of the Archduchess Christina, in the church of the Augustins at Vienna.

This was the life and death of the famous Titian. He was pre-eminently the painter of nature; but to him nature was clothed in a perpetual garb of beauty, or rather, to him nature and beauty were one. In historical compositions and sacred subjects he has been rivalled and surpassed, but as a portrait painter never; and his portraits of celebrated persons have at once the truth and the dignity of history. It would be in vain to attempt to give any account of his works; numerous as they are, not all that are attributed to him in various galleries are his: many are by Palma, Bonifazio, and others his contemporaries, who imitated his manner with more or less success. As almost every gallery in Europe, public and private, contains pictures attributed to him, we shall not attempt to enumerate even the acknowledged *chefs d'œuvre*. It will be interesting, however, to give some account of those of his works contained in

our national and royal galleries. In our National Gallery there are five, of which the Bacchus and Ariadne, the Venus and Adonis, and the Ganymede, are fair examples of his power in the poetical department of his art: but we want one of his inestimable portraits. In the gallery at Hampton Court there are seven or eight pictures attributed to him, most of them in a miserably ruined condition. The finest of these is a portrait of a man in black, with a white shirt seen above his vest up to his throat; in his right hand a red book, his fore-finger between the leaves; it is called in the old catalogues Alessandro de' Medici, and has been engraved under the name of Boccaccio;* but it has no pretensions to either name: it is a wonderful piece of life. There is also a lovely figure of a standing Lucretia, about half-life size, with very little drapery—not at all characteristic of the modest Lucretia who arranged her robes that she might fall with decorum: she holds with her left hand a red veil over her face, and in the right a dagger with which she is about to stab herself. This picture belonged to Charles I., and came to England with the Mantua Gallery in 1629; it was sold in 1650,

* The engraving, which is most admirable, was executed by Cornelius Vischer when the picture was in Holland, in the possession of a great collector of that time, named Van Keynst; from whom the States of Holland purchased it with several others, and presented them to Charles I.

after the king's death, for 200*l.* (a large price for the time), and afterwards restored. In the collection at Windsor there are the portraits of Titian and Andrea Franceschini, half-length, in the same picture. Franceschini was chancellor of the Republic, and distinguished for his literary attainments; he is seen in front in a robe of crimson (the habit of a cavaliero of St. Mark), and holds a paper in his hand. The acute and refined features have that expression of mental power which Titian, without any apparent effort, could throw into a head: the fine old face and flowing beard of Titian appear behind. This picture belonged to Charles I., and was sold after his death for 112*l.*; it has been called in various catalogues Titian and Aretino, which is an obvious mistake: the well known portraits of Aretino have all a full beard and thick lips, a physiognomy quite distinct from that of the Venetian senator in this picture, which is identical with the engraved portraits of Franceschini.

In the Louvre there are twenty-two pictures by Titian; in the Vienna Gallery, fifty-two. The Madrid Gallery contains most of the fine pictures painted for Charles V. and Philip II.

Before we quit the subject of Titian, we may remark that a collection of his engraved portraits would form a complete historical gallery illustrative of the times in which he lived. Not only was

his art at the service of princes and their favourite beauties, but it was ever ready to immortalize the features of those who were the objects of his own affection and admiration. Unfortunately it was not his custom to inscribe on the canvas the names of those who sat to him: many of the most glorious heads he ever painted remain to this hour unknown. Amid all their *reality* (and nothing in painting ever so conveyed the idea of a presence) they have a particular dignity which strikes us with respect; we would fain interrogate them, but they look at us life-like, grandly, calmly, like beings of another world; they seem to recognise us, and we can never recognise them: only we feel the certainty that just as they now look, so they lived and looked in long past times. Such a portrait is that in the Hampton Court gallery; that grave dark man,—in figure and attitude so tranquil, so contemplative —but in his eyes and on his lips a revelation of feeling and eloquence. And such a picture is that of the lady in the Sciarra Palace at Rome, called expressively "Titian's Bella Donna." It has no other name, but no one ever looked at it without the wish to carry it away; and no anonymous portrait has ever been so multiplied by copies. But leaving these, we will subjoin here a short list of those great and celebrated personages who are known to have sat to Titian, and whose portraits remain to us, a precious legacy, and forming the

truest commentary on their lives, deeds, and works.

Charles V.: Titian painted this Emperor several times, with and without his armour. He has always a grave, even melancholy expression; very short hair and beard; a large square brow; and the full lips and projecting under-jaw, which became a deformity in his descendants.

His wife, the Empress Isabella, holding flowers in her hand.

Philip II.: like his father, but uglier, more melancholy, less intellectual. The Duke of Devonshire has a fine full-length, in rich armour. There is a very good one at Florence, in the Pitti Palace; and another at Madrid. In the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge is the picture called "Philip II. and the Princess Eboli," of which there are several repetitions.

Francis I.: half-length, in profile; now in the Louvre. Titian did not paint this king from nature, but from a medal which was sent to him to copy.

The Emperor Ferdinand I.

The Emperor Rudolph II.

The Sultan Solyman II. His wife Roxana. These are engraved after Titian, but from what originals we know not: they cannot be from nature.

The Popes Julius II. (doubtful), Clement VII., Paul III., and Paul IV.

All the Doges of Venice of his time.

Francesco, Duke of Urbino, and his Duchess Eleonora: two wonderful portraits, now in the Florence Gallery.

The Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici: in the Louvre, and in the Pitti Palace.

The Constable de Bourbon.

The famous and cruel Duke of Alva.

Andrea Doria, Doge of Genoa.

Ferdinand Leyva, who commanded at the battle of Pavia.

Alphonso d'Avalos, in the Louvre.

Isabella d' Este, Marchioness of Mantua.

Alphonso, Duke of Ferrara, and his first wife Lucrezia Borgia. In the Dresden Gallery there is a picture by Titian, in which Alphonso is presenting his wife Lucrezia to the Madonna.

César Borgia.

Catherine Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus.

The Poet Ariosto: in the Manfrini Palace at Venice.

Bernardo Tasso.

Cardinal Bembo. Cardinal Sforza. Cardinal Farnese.

Count Castiglione.

Pietro Aretino: several times; the finest is at Florence; another at Munich. The engravings

by Bonasone of Aretino and Cardinal Bembo rank among the most exquisite works of art. There are impressions of both in the British Museum.

Sansovino, the famous Venetian architect.

The Cornaro family: in the possession of the Duke of Northumberland.

Fracastaro, a famous Latin poet.

Irene da Spilemborgo, a young girl who had distinguished herself as a musician, a poetess, and to whom Titian himself had given lessons in painting. She died at the age of eighteen.

Andrea Vesalio, who has been called the father of anatomical science—the particular friend of Titian, and his instructor in anatomy. He was accused falsely of having put a man to death for anatomical purposes, and condemned. Philip II., unwilling to sacrifice so accomplished a man to mere popular prejudice, commuted his punishment to a forced pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He obeyed the sentence; but on his return he was wrecked on the island of Zante, and died there of hunger in 1564. This magnificent portrait, which Titian seems to have painted with enthusiasm, is in the Pitti Palace at Florence.

Titian painted several portraits of himself, but none which represent him young. In the fine portrait at Florence he is about fifty, and in the other known representations he is an old man, with an

aquiline nose and long flowing beard. Of his daughter Lavinia there are many portraits. She was her father's favourite model, being very beautiful in face and form. In a famous picture, now at Berlin, she is represented lifting with both hands a dish filled with fruits. There are four repetitions of this subject: in one the fruits are changed into a casket of jewels; in another she becomes the daughter of Herodias, and the dish bears the head of John the Baptist. All are striking, graceful, full of animation.

The only exalted personage of his time and country whom Titian did not paint was Cosmo I., Grand-Duke of Florence. In passing through Florence, in 1548, Titian requested the honour of painting the Grand-Duke: the offer was declined. It is worthy of remark that Titian had painted, many years before, the father of Cosmo, Giovanni de' Medici, the famous captain of the *Bande Neri*.

THE VENETIAN PAINTERS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

TINTORETTO—PAUL VERONESE—JACOPO BASSANO.

TITIAN was the last great name of the earlier schools of Italy—the last really *great* painter which she produced. After him came many who were good artists, excellent artificers; but, compared with the heaven-endowed creators in art—the poet-painters who had gone before them, they were mere mechanics the best of them. No more Raphaels, no more Titians, no more Michelangeloe, before whom princes stood uncovered! but very good painters, bearing the same relation to their wondrous predecessors that the poets, wits, and playwrights of Queen Anne's time bore to Shakspere. There was, however, an intervening period between the death of Titian and the foundation of the Caracci school, a sort of interregnum, during which the art of painting sank to the lowest depths of laboured inanity and inflated mannerism. In the middle of the sixteenth century Italy swarmed with painters: these go under the general name of the *mannerists*, because they all imitated the *manner* of some one

of the great masters who had gone before them. There were imitators of Michael Angelo, of Raphael, of Correggio:—Vasari and Bronzino, at Florence; the two brothers Taddeo and Federigo Zuccaro, and the Cavalier d'Arpino, at Rome; Federigo Barroccio, of Urbino; Luca Cambiasi, of Genoa; and hundreds of others, who covered with frescoes the walls of villas, palaces, churches, and produced some fine and valuable pictures, and many pleasing and graceful ones, and many more that were mere vapid or exaggerated repetitions of worn-out subjects. And patrons were not wanting, nor industry, nor science; nothing but original and elevated feeling—"the inspiration and the poet's dream."

But in the Venetian school still survived this inspiration, this vital and creative power, when it seemed extinct everywhere besides. From 1540 to 1590 the Venetians were the only *painters* worthy the name in Italy. This arose from the elementary principle early infused into the Venetian artists—the principle of looking to nature, and imitating her, instead of imitating others and one another. Thus as every man who looks to Nature looks at her through his own eyes, a certain degree of individuality was retained even in the decline of the art. There were some who tried to look at nature in the same point of view as Titian, and these are generally included under the general de-

nomination of the School of Titian, though in fact he had no *school* properly so called.

MORONE was a portrait painter who in some of his heads equalled Titian. We have in England only one known picture by him, but it is a masterpiece—the portrait of a Jesuit, in the gallery of the Duke of Sutherland, which for a long time went by the name of Titian's Schoolmaster; it represents a grave, acute looking man, holding a book in his hand, which he has just closed; his finger is between the leaves, and, leaning from his chair, he seems about to address you.

> The very life is warm upon that lip,
> The fixture of the eye has motion in't,
> And we are mock'd by art!

BONIFAZIO, who had studied under Palma and Titian, painted many pictures which are frequently attributed to both these masters. Superior to Bonifazio was ALESSANDRO BONVICINO, by whom there are several exquisite pictures in the Milan Gallery.

ANDREA SCHIAVONE, whose elegant pictures are often met with in collections, was a poor boy, who began the world as an assistant mason and house-painter, and who became an artist from the love of art; but by some fatality, or some quality of mind which we are wont to call a *fatality*, he remained always poor. He painted numerous pictures, which

others obtained, and sold again for high prices, enriching themselves at the expense of his toil of hand and head. At length he died, and in such wretched circumstances, that he was buried by the charity of a few friends. In general the Venetian painters were joyous beings; Schiavone was a rare and melancholy exception. Very different was the temper and the fate of Paris Bordone of Treviso, a man without much genius, weak in drawing, capricious or commonplace in invention, without fire or expression, but a divine colourist, and stamping on his pictures his own buoyant, life-enjoying nature; in this he was like Titian, but utterly inferior in all other respects. Some of his portraits are very beautiful, particularly those of his women, which have been often mistaken for Titian's.

The elder PALMA is also considered as a scholar of Titian, though deriving as little from his personal instruction as did Tintoretto, Bordone, and others of the school. The date of his birth has been rendered uncertain by the mistakes of various authors, who confounded the elder and the younger Palma; but it appears that he was born between 1500 and 1515. He resembled in his manner both Titian and Giorgione. In some pictures he has shown the dignity of Titian, in others a touch of the melancholy sentiment of Giorgione. But not half the pictures attributed to Palma Vecchio are by him. We have not one in our National Gal-

lery; and those at Hampton Court which are attributed to him are not genuine—mere third-rate pictures of the Venetian school. This painter had three daughters of remarkable beauty. Violante, the eldest and most beautiful, is said to have been loved by Titian, and to be the original of some of his most exquisite female portraits. One called Flora, because she has flowers in her hand; and another in the Pitti Palace, in a rich dress. We have the three daughters of Palma, painted by himself, in the Vienna gallery; one, a most lovely creature, with long light brown hair, and a violet in her bosom, is without doubt Titian's Violante. In the Dresden gallery are the same three beautiful girls in one picture, the head in the centre being *the* Violante.

It remains to give some account of two really great men, who were contemporaries of Titian, but could hardly be called his rivals, his equals, or his imitators. They were both inferior to him, but original men in their different styles.

The first was TINTORETTO, born in 1512; his real name was Jacopo Robusti. His father was a dyer (in Italian, *Tintore*); hence he received in childhood the diminutive nickname *Il Tintoretto*, by which he is best known to us. He began, like many other painters whose genius we have recorded, by drawing all kinds of objects and figures on the



Tintoretto.

walls of his father's house. The dyer, being a man of sense, did not attempt to oppose his son's predilection for art, but procured for him the best instruction his means would allow, and even sent him to study under Titian. This did not avail him much, for that most excellent painter was by no means a good instructor, and it is said that he became jealous of the progress of Tintoretto, or perhaps required more docility. Whatever might be the cause, he expelled him from his academy, saying, somewhat rashly, that "he would never be anything but a dauber." Tintoretto did not lose courage; he pursued his studies, and after a few years set up an academy of his own, and on the wall of his painting-room he placed the following inscription, as being expressive of the principles he intended to follow: "*Il disegno di Michel Agnolo: il colorito di Tiziano*" (the drawing of Michael Angelo, and the colouring of Titian). Tintoretto was a man of extraordinary talent, unequalled for the quickness of his invention and the facility and rapidity of his execution. It frequently happened that he would not give himself the trouble to make any design or sketch for his picture, but composed as he went along, throwing his figures on the canvas and painting them in at once, with wonderful power and truth, considering the little time and pains they cost him. But this want of study was fatal to his real greatness. He is the most unequal of

painters. In his compositions we find often the grossest faults in close proximity with the highest beauty. Now he would paint a picture almost equal to Titian; then produce one so coarse and careless, that it seemed to justify Titian's expression of a "dauber." He abused his mechanical power by the utmost recklessness of pencil; but then, again, his wonderful talent redeemed him; and he would enchant his fellow-citizens by the grandeur, the dramatic vivacity, the gorgeous colours, and the luxuriant invention displayed in some of his vast compositions. The larger the space he had to fill, the more he seemed at home; his small pictures are seldom good. His portraits in general are magnificent; less refined and dignified than those of Titian, less intellectual, but quite as full of life.

Tintoretto painted an amazing number of pictures, and of an amazing size—one of them is seventy-four feet in length and thirty feet in height. One edifice of his native city, the School of St. Roch, contains fifty-seven large compositions, each containing many figures the size of life. The two most famous of his pictures are,—a Crucifixion, in which the Passion of our Saviour is represented like a vast theatrical scene, crowded with groups of figures on foot, on horseback, exhibiting the greatest variety of movement and expression; and a large picture, called the Miracle of St. Mark,



Group from the Picture of Christ feeding the Five Thousand, by Tintoretto.

in the Academy of Venice, of which Mr. Rogers possesses the first sketch: a certain slave having become a Christian, and having persevered in paying his devotions at the shrine of St. Mark, is condemned to the torture by his heathen lord; but just as he is bound and prostrate St. Mark descends from above to aid his votary; the executioner is seen raising the broken instruments of torture, and a crowd of people look on in various attitudes of wonder, pity, interest. The whole picture glows with colour and movement.

In our National Gallery we have only one small unimportant work by Tintoretto, but there are ten or eleven in the Royal Galleries; he was a favourite painter of Charles I., who purchased many of his works from Venice. Two pictures, once really fine, which belonged to this king, are now at Hampton Court,—Esther fainting before Ahasuerus, and the Nine Muses. They have suffered terribly from audacious restorers; but in this last picture the figure of the Muse on the right, turning her back, is in a grand style, not unworthy, in its large, bold, yet graceful drawing, of the hand of Michael Angelo himself. In the same collection are three very fine portraits.

Tintoretto died in 1588. His daughter, Marietta Robusti, whose talent for painting was sedulously cultivated by her father, has left some excellent portraits; and in her own time obtained such cele-

brity that the kings of France and Spain invited her to their courts with the most tempting offers of patronage, but she would never leave her father and her native Venice. She died at the age of thirty.

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PAUL CAGLIARI of Verona, better known as Paul Veronese, was born in that city in 1530, the son of a sculptor, who taught him early to draw and to model; but the genius of the pupil was so diametrically opposed to this style of art, that he soon quitted the studio of his father for that of his uncle Antonio Badile, a very good painter, from whom he learned that florid grace in composition which he afterwards carried out in a manner so consummate and so characteristic. At that time Verona, like all the other cities of Italy, could boast of a crowd of painters; and Paul Cagliari, finding that he could not stand against so many competitors, repaired to Venice, where he remained for some time, studying the works of Titian and Tintoret, but without attracting much attention himself, till he had painted, in the church of St. Sebastian, the history of Esther. This was a subject well calculated to call forth his particular talent in depicting the gay, the sumptuous accessories of courtly pomp; banquet scenes, processions, &c.; and from this time he was continually employed by the splendour-loving citizens of Venice,



Paul Veronese.

who delighted in his luxuriant magnificence, and overlooked, or perhaps did not perceive, his thousand sins against fact, probability, costume, time, and place. We are obliged to do the same thing in these days, if we would duly appreciate the works of this astonishing painter. We must shut our eyes to the violation of all proprieties of chronology and costume, and see only the abounding life, the wondrous variety of dignified and expressive figures crowded into his scenes—we may a little marvel how they got there—and the prodigality of light and colours, all harmonized by a mellowness of tone which renders them most attractive to the eye. To give an idea of Paul Veronese's manner of treating a subject, we will take one of his finest and most characteristic pictures, the Marriage of Cana, which was painted for the Refectory of the Convent of San Giorgio at Venice, and is now in the Louvre. It is not less than thirty feet long and twenty feet high, and contains about one hundred and thirty figures, life size. The Marriage Feast of the Galilean citizen is represented with a pomp worthy of "Ormuz or of Ind:" a sumptuous hall of the richest architecture; lofty columns, long lines of marble balustrades rising against the sky; a crowd of guests splendidly attired, some wearing orders of knighthood, are seated at tables covered with gorgeous vases of gold and silver, attended by slaves, jesters, pages,

and musicians. In the midst of all this dazzling pomp, this display of festive enjoyment, these moving figures, these lavish colours in glowing approximation, we begin after a while to distinguish the principal personages, our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, the Twelve Apostles, mingled with Venetian senators and ladies clothed in the rich costume of the sixteenth century—monks, friars, poets, artists, all portraits of personages existing in his own time; while in a group of musicians he has introduced himself and Tintoretto playing the violoncello, while Titian plays the bass. The bride in this picture is said to be the portrait of Eleanor of Austria, the sister of Charles V., and second wife of Francis I., of whom there is a most beautiful portrait at Hampton Court. There is a series of these Scriptural banquet-scenes, painted by Paul Veronese, all in the same extraordinary style, but varied with the utmost richness of fancy, invention, and colouring: Christ entertained by Levi, now in the Academy of Venice; the Supper in the house of Simon the Pharisee, with Mary Magdalen at the feet of our Saviour, now in the Durazzo Palace at Genoa, of which the first sketch, a magnificent piece of colour, is in the possession of Mr. Rogers; and the Supper at Emmaus, in which he has introduced his wife and others of his family as spectators.

Paul Veronese died in 1588. He was a man of amiable manners, of a liberal, generous spirit, and



From the Picture of St. Longius, by Paul Veronese.

extremely pious. When he painted for churches and convents, he frequently accepted very small prices, sometimes merely the value of his canvas and colours: for that stupendous picture in the Louvre, the Marriage of Cana, he received not more than 40*l.* of our money.

He painted all subjects, even the most solemn, in the same gorgeous style. He had sons and relations who were educated in his atelier and assisted in painting his great pictures, and who after his death continued to carry on a sort of manufactory of pictures in the same magnificent ornamental style; but they were far inferior painters, and had not, like him, the power of redeeming gross faults of judgment and taste by a vivid imagination and strong feeling of character.

Almost all galleries and collections contain specimens of the works of this splendid and popular painter; but the finest are in the churches at Venice, in the Louvre, and in the Dresden gallery, where there are fifteen of his pictures.

In our National Gallery there is a fine picture of the Consecration of St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, in 1391: the principal personages are very nobly conceived, and the foreshortened figure of the angel descending above the kneeling saint, and holding the mitre and crozier, explains the subject in a manner at once very poetical and very intelli-

gible. The little sketch of Europa is a study for the splendid picture now at Vienna.

Before we close the list of the elder painters of Italy we must mention as flourishing at this time the Da Ponte family of Bassano. Giacomo da Ponte, called old Bassano, was the head of it. His father had been a painter before him, and he, with his four sons, Leandro, Francesco, Gian Battista, and Girolamo, set up in their native town of Bassano a kind of manufactory of pictures which were sold in the fairs and markets of the neighbouring cities, and became popular all over the north of Italy. The Bassani were among the earliest painters of the *genre* style; they treated sacred and solemn subjects in a homely familiar manner which was pleasing and intelligible to the people, and, at the same time, with a power of imitation, a light and spirited execution, and in particular a gem-like radiance of colour which fascinates even judges of art. There are pictures of the elder Bassano which at the first glance remind one of a handful of rubies and emeralds. His best and largest works are at Bassano; his small pictures are numerous, and scattered through most galleries. He painted sheep, cattle, and poultry well, and was fond of introducing them in the pastoral scenes of the Old Testament, where they are appropriate: sometimes, unhappily, where

they are least appropriate they are the principal objects. His scenery and grouping have a rural character; and his personages, even sacred and heroic, look like peasants. They are not vulgar, but rustic. The same kind of spirit informed the Bassani that afterwards informed the Dutch school —the imitation of familiar objects without elevation and without selection; but the nature of Italy was as different from that of Holland as Bassano is different from Jan Steen. Like all the Venetians, the Bassani were good portrait painters. We have a fine portrait by Jacopo Bassano in our National Gallery, and at Hampton Court several very fine and characteristic pictures, which will give an excellent idea of his general manner; the best are Jacob's Journey and the Deluge. Mr. Rogers possesses the two best pictures of this artist now in England; they are small, but most beautiful, vivid as gems in point of colour, with more dignity and feeling than is usual: the subjects are, the Good Samaritan, and Lazarus at the door of the Rich Man. Nothing could tempt Bassano from the little native town where he flourished, grew rich, and brought up a numerous family: he died in 1592.

All these men had original genius and that individuality of character which lends a vital interest

to all productions of art, whether the style be elevated and ideal or confined to the imitation of common nature: but to them succeeded a race of *mannerists* and imitators, so that about the close of the sixteenth century all originality seemed extinguished at Venice, as well as everywhere else: and here we close the history of the earlier painters of Italy.

THE END.

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